

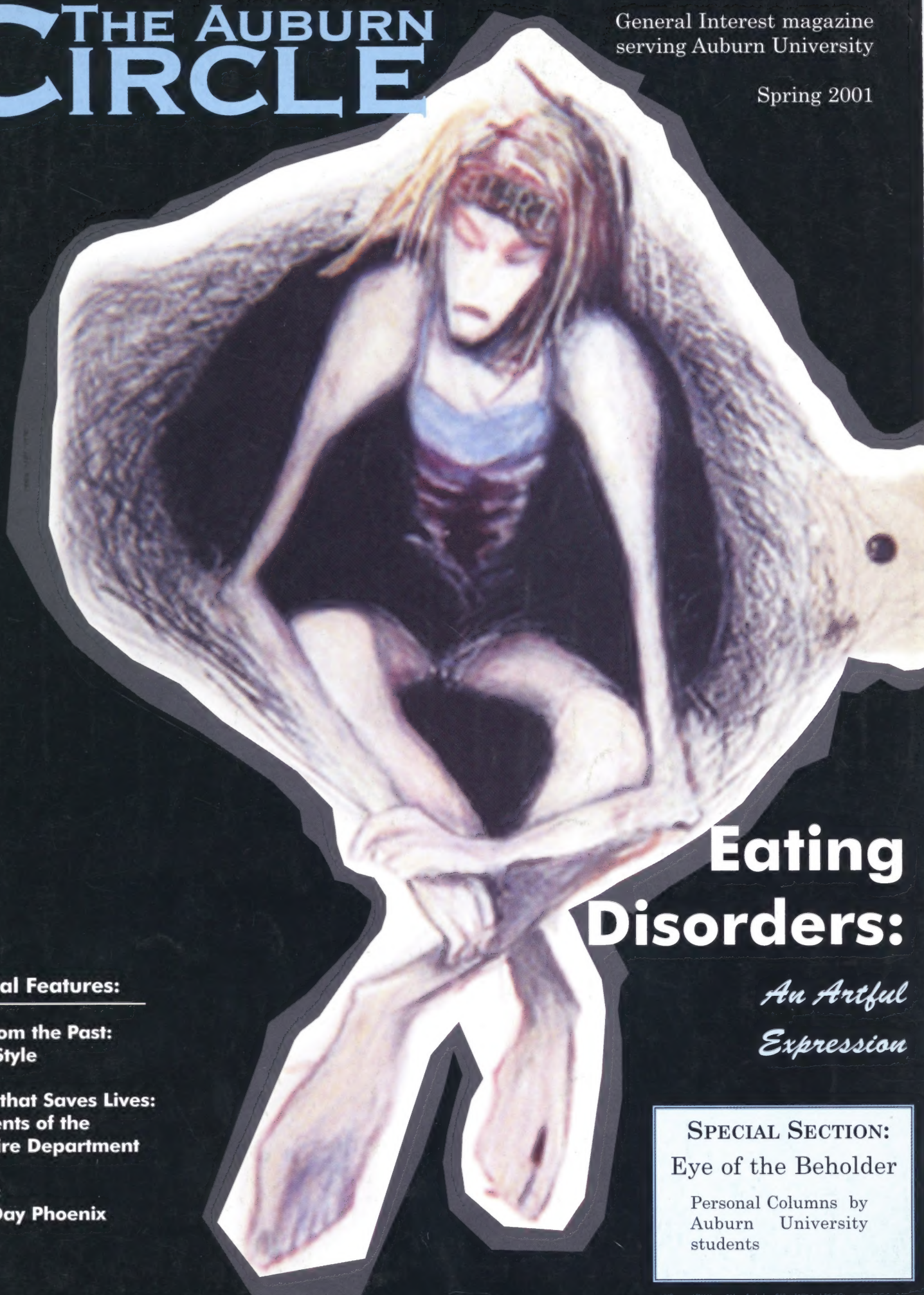
THE AUBURN CIRCLE

General Interest magazine
serving Auburn University

Spring 2001

"The unexamined life is not worth living."

-Socrates



Eating Disorders:

*An Artful
Expression*

Special Features:

**A Blast from the Past:
Upstairs Style**

**Learning that Saves Lives:
The Students of the
Auburn Fire Department**

**Ryan Lee:
Modern Day Phoenix**

SPECIAL SECTION:
Eye of the Beholder

Personal Columns by
Auburn University
students

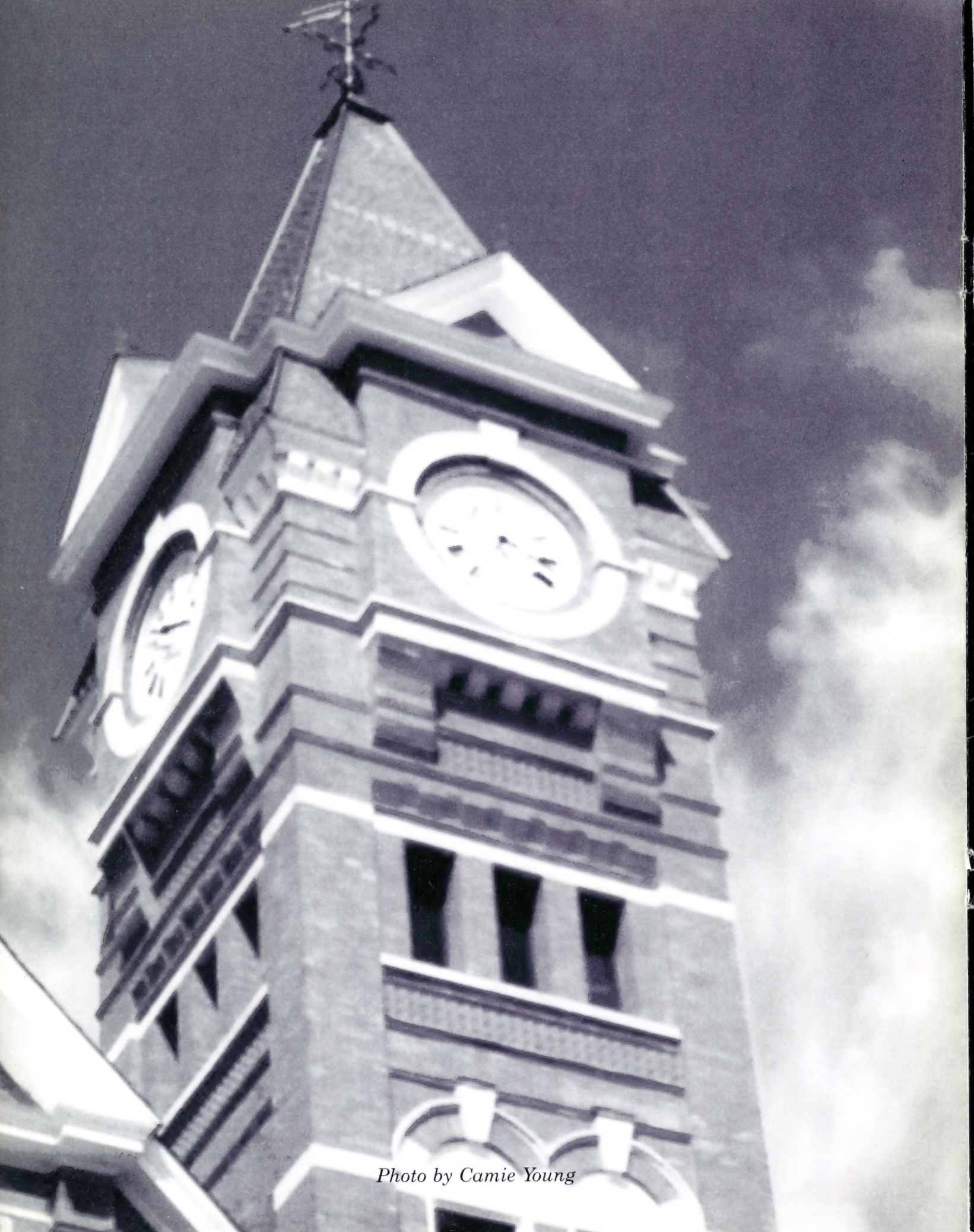


Photo by Camie Young

THE AUBURN CIRCLE

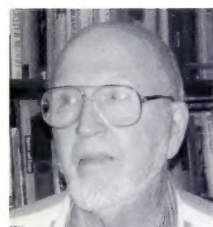
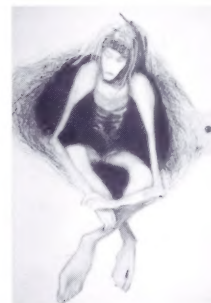
Auburn's General Interest Magazine

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"The unexamined life is
not worth living. - Socrates

Editor's Address

*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And - like the baseless fabric of this vision -
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.*

*William Shakespeare
(The Tempest V.i. 148-158)*

I walked into this job with no idea of the responsibilities it came with. I thought the position would look good on my resume, and I would learn a lot about magazine publishing -- a field which I wish to join sometime after graduation.

Most of all, I walked into this job with no idea of the possibilities it offered.

I like to think that I transformed *The Auburn Circle* this year. I like to think that I restored basic magazine journalism back into its content and that the world will be a better place because of the work I have done this year.

Of course, those dreams are as naive as they are ambitious.

But *The Circle* does contain more well-rounded content and has set the tone for its success in the future.

This year has been a struggle for *The Circle* staff. We have expanded, and with that expansion comes disillusionment. I hope that in trying to reach a larger audience, we did not alienate the magazine's loyal readers.

But *The Circle* had the potential to be a great magazine for the entire university -- not just the select group of art and English majors who have remained loyal to the publication.

Don't get me wrong; those art and English

majors are invaluable to the quality of this magazine. But they aren't the heart and soul of it. The heart and soul are the University students, alumni and faculty that create, fund and read the magazine.

After four years of involvement in nearly every aspect of this University you can imagine, I brought a lot of ideas to this publication. Through those ideas, I tried to reach as many students in as many different situations as possible.

I walked into this job with a vision -- a vision of what *The Auburn Circle* could be.

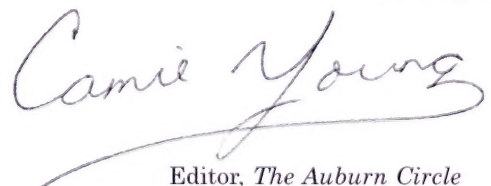
"Our revels now are ended," as Prospero said in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. I can only hope that my vision and my dedication brought a little something back to the University that I love so dearly and that I will soon be leaving.

"We are such stuff as dreams are made on."

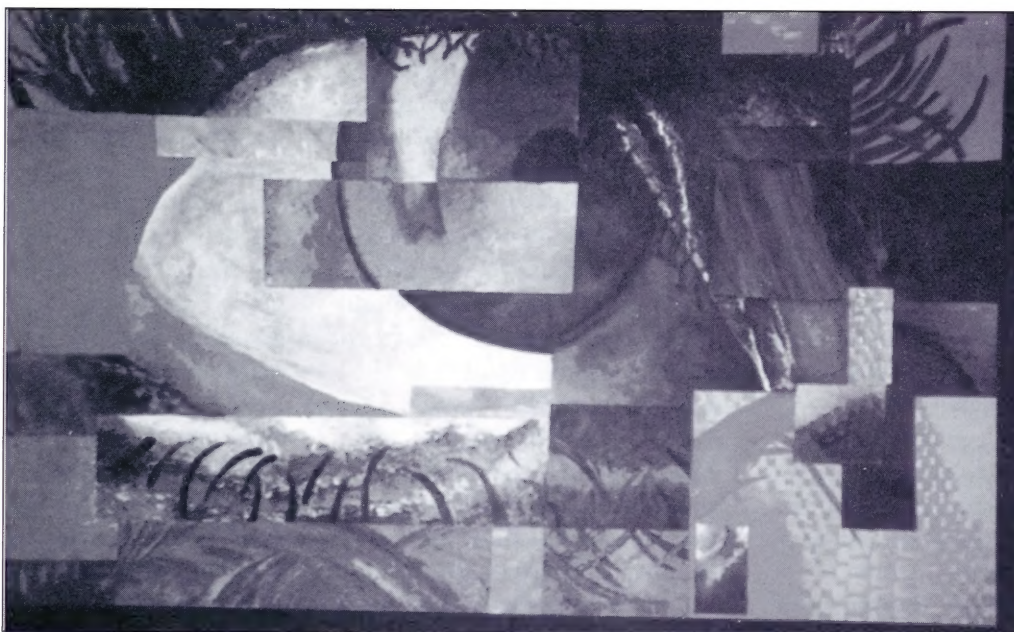
And if the dream can ever be realized, we must continue the work.

It has been an honor to serve you and Auburn University.

War Eagle,



Editor, *The Auburn Circle*



In the Eye of the Beholder
Katie Parker

by Sarah Moreman

and the walls come crumbling down . . .

The minute I open my mouth, I can predict the reaction: the stranger would literally drop everything and gesture with his hands in wild excitement as if he discovered the answer to one of the world's greatest mysteries.

This reaction thrusts me into the stereotypical category of hearing impaired persons who are "deaf and dumb." This immediate response to my deafness is always irritating. Why do they assume that just

because I am deaf I know sign language? Why do they always seize every opportunity (me for example) to flaunt their knowledge of sign language?

Strangers always have this notion that all hearing impaired persons must be fluent in sign language. When they get all excited about finding out that there is a deaf person in their presence, they do not stop and see if I, or any other deaf person, minds.

They cannot imagine rushing forward to practice their sign language on a deaf person they just met could be perceived as an insult. An insult that leads to clumping all deaf people together as if to remind them they can never be part of the hearing world no matter how well we have adapted.

I was not raised to know and use sign language; being part of the hearing world, I can communicate like any other person. My speech may be

slurred and incomprehensible at times, but I have adapted pretty well in this world.

Sign language is a series of hand movements, and does not encourage the user to speak. Sign language does not help the user learn how to speak; rather, there is a sign for every word, making the verbalization unnecessary.

Instead of sign language, I learned how to communicate through another symbolic language-Cued Speech. Cued Speech is based on the phonemes of the English language; therefore, this helps me

learn how to lipread really well, pronounce words correctly, and use my residual hearing. Analogically speaking, Cued Speech is a keyboard. One must know where the correct placements of the letters are before being able to blend the letters together into words quickly as the mind tells the fingers to move.

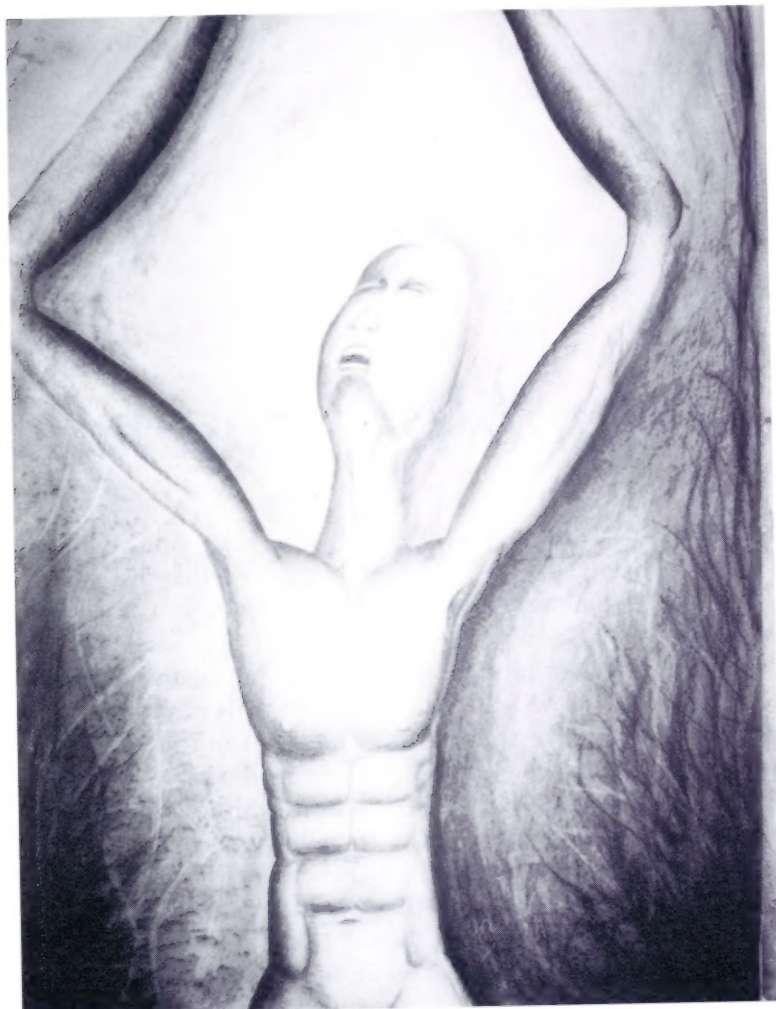
Cued Speech consists of a hand movement for each phoneme; and once having learned all the hand movements, they are easily combined to form any words from any language. For sign lan-

guage, there is a new sign for every word, and another language is incomprehensible. Another difference between sign language and Cued Speech is that the latter is like training wheels on a bicycle. Once I have gotten the hang of speaking and hearing the English language, I do not need to have Cued Speech to hold me up -- in time the training wheels come off.

The assumption that every deaf person communicates only by using sign language is a form of prejudice -- such as recently when I met a young man from Alaska, my first reaction was, "Do you live in an igloo?"

People face all types of prejudice, ranging from subtleties to outright obvious, through the mediums of other human beings, media, etc. These examples depict the forms of prejudice that are common and everyday; it is not surprising if one is faced with some form of common, everyday prejudice.

Due to prejudgment, there is a lack of respect for the deaf person's individuality. Their reaction never ceases to irritate me, for they seem to be pompous and eager to prove something -- their knowledge of sign language-and think themselves wonderful just because they are following the do unto others as they do unto you golden rule. Family and friends constantly tried to reason with me that those people are just being friendly and that they wanted to let me know that they are approachable and easy to communicate



Mark Griffo

I am my own person with a unique gift of deafness who happens to speak well enough to get by in the hearing world. Nope, I am not the answer to one of the world's greatest mysteries. In other words, a deaf person is only a human being who happens to be different in one aspect, not one of the world's greatest mysteries.

with for they know sign language.

Family and friends do not understand or see that I was a victim of prejudice.

They are practically asking me to lower myself and accept the status of being deaf and dumb.

I may be deaf, but I am not totally deaf. There is no other deaf person that hears the same way as I, nor do I hear the same way as another. Ranging from totally deaf to hard of hearing, we deaf persons hear differently -- like the shades of a person's skin.

Emphatically, people need to understand that not all deaf persons are receptive to their immediate reaction of using sign language. They need to have their eyes open to this fact especially after witnessing Heather Whitestone being crowned Miss America 1995. She did not grow up using sign language; rather, she was taught to speak in order to be part of the hearing world. Yet she does know sign language, because it is part of her culture.

Like Heather, I learned some sign language to understand my culture. However, I find myself unable to communicate with my peers of the deaf culture, because their type of sign language is different from mine. They use American Sign Language that does not mirror spoken English. I know the signed English version of sign language; it is grammatically correct.

My inadequacy with the usage of sign language was confirmed when I went to a weekend conference for the deaf persons of Alabama during my senior year in high school. Throughout the conference, I could not help but stare at others' "con-

versing hands." They were entertainment themselves; however, I could not understand what they were saying with their hands. Their facial expressions were very animated, making up for the lack of inflection in their voices. Yes, they could move their lips to speak -- but they usually did not use their voices.

When I tried to talk with one of my fellow deaf peers, it was difficult for her to understand my grammatical version of the sign language and vice versa with their own slang version. So I asked the girl to talk with her voice; she squeaked out unintelligible sounds and we still could not communicate.

It was ironic that I could not communicate in the world where the strangers and friends alike thought I rightfully belong to.

The distinctiveness of my and other deaf persons' versions of sign language is one more reason to acknowledge that all deaf persons are individual beings with different lifestyles and characteristics. When a person meets me, I can only brace myself to disappoint the person if he falls into the trap of thinking that I know sign language-by snatching away the assumed answer to one of the world's greatest mysteries.

I am my own person with a unique gift of deafness who happens to speak well enough to get by in the hearing world. Nope, I am not the answer to one of the world's greatest mysteries. In other words, a deaf person is only a human being who happens to be different in one aspect, not one of the world's greatest mysteries.



Camie Young



Camie Young

Grace

Things you notice when you catch your mother cheating on your father: the red dress she's wearing is yours, the short one without sleeves, even though it's late February and still cold; the shoes that are usually strewn all over the floor are lined up neatly in the corner of the den; the only light in the room is coming from three candles, the ones your father brought home for your mother from the annual medical convention he flew to in Berlin last winter, which is where he is tonight; the man she is with has very groomed hair that reminds you of the first boy you ever kissed, who your mother didn't like because he had been caught once with pot; this man is better looking than your father, who is blond and shorter than this man and never did quite look like he and your mother belonged together, because she is taller and has dark hair and is thin in a way that makes it believable that she has never had a child.

Things the man with whom your mother is cheating on your father does when you catch them: he rises from the couch, where he had been sitting with your mother on his lap, and introduces himself, though you do not remember his name a second after he says it; he extends his hand, which you shake without making eye contact because you are now looking at the picture on the end table next to the couch, the one of you and your parents outside the Atlanta DMV office on your fifteenth birthday last spring, when you got your learner's permit; he goes to your mother's purse on a chair across from the couch, and without asking, pulls out her pack of Newport Menthols and goes out back to smoke, shutting the door as quietly as a burglar who leaves a house he's robbed while everyone was still asleep.

Things your mind unravels when you catch your mother cheating on your father: if the "2001: A Space Odyssey" wing was open on Saturdays at the Patterson Planetarium in Columbus, your tenth grade class could have completed the field trip and not arrived back in Atlanta an hour and a half early and you wouldn't have taken a ride home from Zachary Russell, who lives in your neighborhood, because at your house no one was answering the phone when you called for a ride and how just minutes ago he was kissing you on your front step, his hands on your breasts and yours on his butt, holding each other in place, and you never thought your mother might be inside the house, doing the same thing with a man who's not your father.

Things your mother says to you when you catch her cheating on your father: "I want to talk to you about this" and "Sometimes in life we feel things and we don't know why" and "I don't know why this happened, Grace, but it did and we should discuss it."

Things you say to your mother when you catch her cheating on your father: "I'm sorry," meaning that you're sorry for interrupting her night, sorry that you know now what you didn't know a few minutes ago, sorry that she must be unhappy, sorry that you have misunderstood what is going on in your family, sorry that your father might find out, sorry that you have her same brown hair and same skinny fingers that rings never fit, sorry that this moment with her has ruined the good feeling you had that a boy had felt you up, and for the first time you had wanted him to.

Things you realize about your house when you catch your mother cheating on your father: you feel as though you're the only object in the den standing still because the room has begun to feel liquid, like the distance between you and the walls is shifting second to second; you look toward the kitchen and think of how your father promised he'd teach you to cook pancakes his special way next weekend; you look toward the loft upstairs, your favorite part of the house because you can sit up there quietly and eavesdrop on the downstairs; you look around the den, where last week you found your parents hugging in the middle of the room, clinging to each other in a way that made you embarrassed to have come in because it seemed like a moment of private love; it crosses your mind that maybe this isn't your house, that maybe your key fit the wrong door, and you want to leave.

Things you do when you've just caught your mother cheating on your father: you take her keys that are sitting on the chair where her purse was, and leave the house; the outside lights on the porch steps are off and you feel your way around to the garage, and open your mother's BMW; you back into the street, focusing on your speed because not only do you not have a license yet, you don't even have your learner's permit on you; the radio is playing "If You Don't Know Me By Now," and you turn it all the way down even though normally you'd sing along; you open the moon roof, hoping the cold air will distract you from the fact that your mother saw you take the keys, must have heard the car, and didn't try to stop you.

Things you do when you drive past Zachary Russell's house when you've just caught your mother cheating on your father: you consider going to his front door, leading him by the hand to your mother's car, and doing it with him in the backseat, or the front if you both would fit; you decide to park and go to his door; he agrees to go driving with you, partially, you think, because he knows it's illegal because that's the kind of boy Zachary Russell is, and that's part of what you like about him; his talk about the field trip to the planetarium that day makes you think of where you should take him, where the two of you won't be disturbed so you drive to the undeveloped lot behind the fence in your backyard, because you are tired of having to see things tonight, and there are no lights out there.

Things that occur to you after you've caught your mother cheating on your father:

Things that occur to you after you've caught your mother cheating on your father: it crosses your mind that your mother has probably had sex with the man at your house tonight and for a second you wonder if she felt like you do, sitting in a car at nighttime with a boy with whom you intend to have sex for the first time; it is cloudy, but you can see the full moon, and Zachary leans toward you, trying to point out the face in the moon, which you've never been able to see; he puts his hand on your leg, and that's when you know you and Zachary Russell won't have sex tonight, that probably you'll never have sex with Zachary Russell, even though you have no reason to think that, but you don't think it, you know it, like awaking and knowing all day you had a dream that night that you can feel but you can't remember, like how you knew your mother was cheating on your father, even though you wouldn't acknowledge to yourself that you knew; Zachary kisses you, trying to position himself around the gear shift, and for some reason you remember how, when you were younger, your parents teased you because you thought a giant lived in this field, protected from civilization by your backyard fence and how, as you've gotten older, it's become a joke between the three of you, the giant living out back, because now you all know you're too old for it to be true.

Things that make you want to go home after you've caught your mother cheating on your father: you don't want to sleep but you want to lay in your bed with your eyes closed so maybe you can fool yourself that you are asleep; you don't feel like crying, but you feel like you should want to, and if you do start crying, you don't want to do it in front of Zachary Russell; you want your mother to have to be in the house with the man and you at the same time, because you want to remind her of what you know she's doing; you want to make sure all of this actually happened, just in case you are mistaken and there was no man in your den tonight with your mother, because if you are mistaken, you can just forget and nothing will have to change.

Things you say to Zachary Russell in your mother's car after you've caught your mother cheating on your father: "I should probably go home," and "Thanks for coming with me," and "I'll see you at school Monday."

Things that happen when you return home after you've caught your mother cheating on your father: you pull into the garage, and stand on the street, listening to the sound of the absence of cars and people and pets; you look at your left hand, and your middle fingernail is broken, slanted and jagged, which you hadn't realized before and you wonder how you broke it and how you didn't notice til now; you walk toward the front door, the outside lights still off, and as you approach you see the lights of the cigarettes from the two figures on the front step, and you stop when you get to them, the three of you just standing there in the dark.

And so she chose...

by Lauren Glenn

He wouldn't leave her alone.
She begged him to.
But he had never listened before
and he wouldn't listen now.

He sent her letters and flowers.
He called her twice a week and
when she didn't answer, he left
silent messages on her machine.

He did everything she had begged him to do
when they were together, and now, now that she
was over him, now that she thought she had
someone she cared about so much that it kept
her awake at night, who she thought cared
about her, now that she was one hundred miles
away, he decided that he couldn't live without
her.

Now he wrote her letters.

Now he called when he said he would, even
when she asked him not to.

Now he sent her flowers.

"Please stop," she would plead with him. "This
isn't good. I have someone, and I care about him,
and I can't tell you what you want to hear. You
can't do this now. It's too late."

"Fine," he would say, and she could hear
despondent anger in his voice.

And two days later she would receive a poem
in the mail.

She tried to make him hate her.

"I don't love you," she would scream. "I
thought I did, but I didn't. It was a mistake. We
were a mistake."

The coldness in her voice froze even her, but he
simply replied, "You did love me. You did and
you do now."

"I don't," she would insist, her eyes swelling
with tears.

"We're soulmates."

"I have a soul-mate and it's not you."

"I love you."

She decided that if her choices were to
be alone or spend the rest of her life
waiting...she would opt for loneliness."

"Please stop."

"I need you."

"You can't need someone when you don't know
who they really are."

"I know you."

"You can't know me. I don't know me after
twenty years; how can you know me after one?"

"I know you love me."

And she hung up the phone.

And she cried.

And she wished that her boyfriend would call
her and wash away these doubts. It was five
o'clock and he still hadn't called. He said he
would call her and he hadn't yet.

He did that often.

She waited half an hour and when the phone
still hadn't rang, she got in her car and she
drove to the bridge.

She went there whenever things were not
right.

She would sit there and stare at the water and
wish that one thing, just one thing, would
change.

And then everything would be okay.

And when nothing changed, she would stand
and lean over the railing, her toes grazing the
edge, and stare at the water a hundred feet
below her, and wonder how deep it was.

One had promised a phone call, one had prom-
ised to never call again.

But when she returned home, she discovered
that neither had kept his promise.

Because once again there was a silent message on her answering machine.

A silent message that said, "I'll never disappear. Whenever you think that I have finally stopped caring, there will be flowers on your doorsteps. When you just know that I've gone away, there will be a letter in your mailbox. Every time I move, you'll know my change of address. You love me, and you love me still. I need you and I always will."

She had been home for two hours and he still hadn't called.

She gave up on hoping that he would call and called him. No one answered. She left a message but didn't hear from him for another two hours.

They talked for only fifteen minutes, when silence struck them both, and to escape it, she said she had another call.

That happened a lot lately. It scared her. She cared so much. But lately it seemed as if she cared more than he did. They had been dating for months and she didn't know him. She tried everything. She asked questions. She told him things about herself. She was truly, without a doubt, interested in everything he ever said and everything he ever talked about.

But it that didn't seem to mean anything anymore and she began to feel as if she knew him better when she first met him, than she did after months.

She saw her boyfriend at

school the next day.

He smiled at her and asked her to go to lunch, as if he had called her yesterday, without her having to call him first. As if he had always called her when he said he would.

And she was tired of pretending that she was happy. She was tired of pretending that he was perfect. And she was tired of pretending that it didn't matter that she cared more about him than he did about her.

And in the middle of the hallway, surrounded by people who didn't realize he hadn't called, she said, "No," and "I can't do this anymore."

They stopped and stared and looked awkwardly away, trying to finish their conversations as if they hadn't noticed, but continued to stare out of the corners of their eyes as she walked away.

A month later she was over him.

A week after that, he began to send her flowers.

And he called when he said he would and wrote her poems.

He said, "I need you."

She pleaded for him to let her go.

He never understood her before. He refused to understand her now.

She was tired of trying to be understood by people who only wanted to see in her what would convenience themselves.

So she drove to the bridge.

And she stared at the water.

And she wished that things would change.

She wished she had slept with fewer people. She wished that she wasn't tired all of the time. She wished that her grades were just a little bit better. She wished the emptiness in her heart would disappear.

She wished the bridge would collapse, so they could stand by her coffin and say, "This is all my fault. If only I had been there for her when she needed me. If only I had left her alone when she asked me to. She only went there when she was upset. And she was upset because of me." Then they would look at her mother, who would stare at them coldly, and then break into hysterics because they had taken her only daughter. Her only family.

But the bridge remained intact, so she stood and leaned over the railing, her toes grazing the edge.

She wanted to see the woods burn and cry out to the orange and smoking sky, cry so that everyone could hear her. So everyone could understand.

She decided that if her choices were to be alone or live the rest of her life waiting for people who would never love her in the way she most needed it, who would always be a step behind in sharing her affections, she would opt for loneliness.

To hell with them.

And so, she stretched out her arms.

Looked up to the sky.

Looked down to the river.

Smiled to herself, despite a tear resting on her chin.

Realized that nothing would ever change.

Felt the wind pushing against her face.

And she discovered the depth of the water.

A silent message that said, "I'll never disappear. Whenever you think that I have finally stopped caring, there will be flowers on your doorsteps. When you just know that I've gone away, there will be a letter in your mailbox. Every time I move, you'll know my change of address. You love me, and you love me still. I need you, and I always will."

by Rachel Robinson

Cigarette Break

I walked the length of the
Walnut Street Bridge
and slipped down into the
shadows beneath it.

Winding down

terrace

after

terrace

of stacked earth,
until finally reaching
the water's edge.

There I sat in silence.

Blowing rings of white smoke
into the dark, night air...
watching closely as they
drifted out above the water,
and dispersed without a sound.

There was a peace in that place.

I was able to breathe.

A Blast
from the Past

UPSTAIRS

STYLE

story by Ali Heck
graphic by Camie Young

The faint sound of music can be heard and appropriately, it seems, the voice of Bob Dylan waifs through every room of the store.

It sits unnoticed between Smoothie King and The Big Blue Bagel. The door frame, which is painted an eye-catching shade of purple, hints at the possibilities waiting above. The vintage clothing store of Upstairs Style has been a well hidden secret since 1995.

The entrance way is a narrow set of rickety wooden stairs that lead to the second floor where the store is located.

Anyone who wanders in cannot help but stare at the huge posters of Pearl Jam and U2 that are glued to the worn plaster wall beside the stairwell.

Once the stairs are conquered the main event awaits -- a trip to a world that was once a reality and is now just a memory.

A small room that holds vintage dresses is the first to greet customers. Bandanas border trim the wall underneath the molding that is painted the same purple as the door frame. To the left is a small set of shelves that hold every scent of incense imaginable. Next to it is a rack crammed full of dresses of all shapes, colors, fabrics and sizes.

The faint sound of music can be heard and appropriately, it seems, the voice of Bob Dylan waifs through every room of the store. To the right of the room is a glass display case that also serves as the checkout counter.

Eccentric and talkative, owner Wanda Barnett has reddish hair and a contagious laugh. She sits patiently at the checkout counter and says hello and goodbye to every customer who walks in and out of her door, no matter who or how many come through.

While she sits she answers questions about what she does and does not have in her store.

She does have pants and shirts that would work for a 70s pimp costume which males seem to largely request around fall and on Halloween.

She doesn't have swing dresses, which have become a demand in the past few years. "We don't carry them because people aren't willing to pay what they are worth," Barnett said.

There was a simple yet poignant reason for opening Upstairs Style. "There wasn't anything like it in Auburn," Barnett said. "I signed the lease three weeks after I moved to Auburn and six weeks later we were open."

Barnett and her son opened so he would not have to work his senior year, while completing his degree in industrial design.

Barnett is a student herself, majoring in health promotions. She hopes to go to alternative medicine school when she finishes her degree.

She greets another customer who passes by and into the next room.

There are two middle rooms, one that holds men's suits made of anything from cotton to polyester. Clothing John Travolta would have worn in Saturday Night Fever hangs on the racks -- suits with big pointy collars and bell-bottom pants.

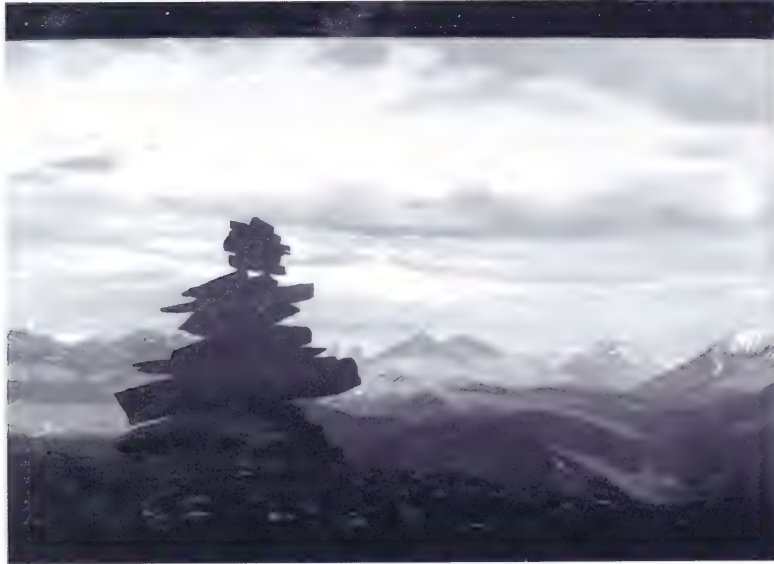
The other room contains men's shirts with wacky designs that scream disco inferno and shoes that shout vintage trendy. The room that is located the farthest back holds jackets, corduroys and jeans.

A second dressing room is in the corner, smashed between stacks and racks of vintage jeans. Anything found in this room would be a great find for two reasons. First because heaps of pants and sweaters cover the floor and clothing racks, it would take time to search through the massive amounts of clothing. Secondly because anything in the store is a great find.

Jeans are sold for \$15 and dresses start at around \$35. Other clothing in the store varies well within the range of a college student's budget.

When the store opened in September of 1995 its normal clientele included everyone from the average student to the not so average drag queen. "We

Ben Hubbard



used to get a lot of drag queens, but we really don't get them anymore. I do get a lot of tourists," she said. "I've even had people do photo shoots on the stairs."

Barnett said the biggest rushes for the store are during Halloween and the beginning and end of fall when sororities and fraternities hold 60s and 70s socials. "I do get people that wear vintage clothing," she said. "It's a bigger market than it used to be."

Originally, the store was listed under 'costumes' in the phonebook. "I used to dread answering the phone around Halloween," she said. "I used to get calls for all kinds of children's costumes, everything from Barney to Batman."

Now the store is listed under 'buy and sale of clothing.' But Barnett is quick to point out that Upstairs Style is a vintage clothing store and not a consignment or thrift store.

"People call me up and think that they can come drop off their old polos and things." She

only sells clothing that is considered vintage. The clothing she sells she acquires at estate sales. "I travel all over the place," she said. "I go to Santa Fe, South Florida, and Georgia."

Because of the location many people never know that Upstairs Style exists. "I named it that because I was trying to solve the problem of people not knowing it was here," Barnett said. That also is her explanation for the purple door frame. "I still hear people say, 'I never knew you were here' when they come up the stairs. I'm on one of the main streets in Auburn and I have a purple door!"

Upstairs Style feels as if time has traveled backwards and settled somewhere into the 60s or 70s. There is no limit to the originality that each outfit contains. Students find the perfect costume, adults get to reminisce and drag queens find the perfect outfit for a night out.

Upstairs Style keeps the present in touch with the past.



Alyson Hargraves



Real Life, Real Love
Tiffani Pike

BLACK GIRL

by Donna Roberts

Black Girl,

When you goin'
wif yo' coal black haih
an' yo' eyes aglowin'

Black Girl,

You aint got no shoes on yo' feet
an' listen heah,
yo' clothes they aint so neat.

Black Girl,

Why's yo' skin so brown-
so smooth an' cleah
an' you's always smilin', don't neveh frown.

Black Girl,

Whatchu plannin' ta do-
you's always got yo' head in de aih
you think somebodeh lookin' atchu?

Black Girl,

Wait a minute
don't cry
what I said, I didn't mean it.

Black Girl,

When you goin'?

Peter Pan, Jesus, and the Big Bad Wolf

by Mandy Hudson

It was a lonely street and a lonely neighborhood, down by the tracks.

I stepped out of the car and slowly stood, leaning on the car door.

Where did you go?

Yep, this was it. 661 Shawnee Street.

Tell me where.

I was standing in front of a brown, brick house with tasteless green shutters and a small porch, sitting on a small rise of lawn, two lots from the end of the street. The grass was fairly well-kept, but weeds sprouted from the cracks around the curb, and the driveway was soiled with oil.

*I'll hide behind a tree
and close my eyes.
When I open them,
will I hear you giggle?
I'll pretend not to hear and not to see your shoe
sticking out from behind the toolshed.
And I'll look for you
though I know where you are.*

I slammed the car door and put the keys in my pocket, walking across the street and up the driveway. Before I knew it, I was standing on the porch, next to a weathered rocking chair and stringy welcome mat. As I stood on the porch, I heard a low rumble - in the distance, growing closer - and a powerful, mournful, whistle blast echoing through the trees. I closed my eyes.

It's coming.

The train grew closer, the whistle screaming, penetrating the air.

It's coming, and I can't stop it.

After a few seconds the whistle fell silent - the train was now here - with its steady rumble and screeching wheels.

I don't know what to do. You've got to help me.

I waited for it to pass.

You've got to help me.

Finally the train had passed, and the air was still again.

Please.

My eyes opened.

"That was a big one!"

I was still standing on the porch. Bubbles, big and small, were floating past my eyes. One stopped, hovering right in front of my face and when I blinked, it popped.

"Don't eat the bubbles!" a small voice cried.

I turned my head to see a child, a little girl, seated by my feet on the steps.

"Look ... there it goes ... A *baby* bubble!" she squealed.

"Hi," I said, standing over the child.

She looked up at me, squinting, shifting uneasily in my shadow.

"Hello."

I spy, with my little eye.

Someone who feels that the best has gone by.

I spy a face, long and sad.

I could see she had sandy brown hair, short and curly in scattered tufts, light eyes and a familiar smile. Her hair was

kept out of her eyes only by two plastic red barrettes. She dipped her wand into the bottle of Mr. Bubble she held in her hand and raised it to her puckered lips, blowing gently.

"Move," she commanded, as a new parade of bubbles were lifted by the breeze. "I can't see."

I sat down beside her on the brick porch steps.

We were familiar strangers, she and I.

"What are you doing," I asked.

"Blowing bubbles," she replied, matter of factly.

I spy with my little eye,

the person, perhaps,

who can answer the "Why?"

She wore a tiny red-checked shirt, red pants, and white sandals. Her cheeks were pink with concentration, and her tongue licked the corner of her mouth.

Is it tall?

No.

Is it short?

No.

Is it big?

Yes.

She looked away, into the trees across the road, and back at me.

"You want to meet my friend?" she asked suddenly, putting the bubble solution down.

"Sure," I said.

She stood up and took a few steps into the yard, as if she were creeping up on a bird or squirrel. She raised her right hand and began to curl her index finger, beckoning.

"Come on. I won't hurt you. You can come out," she called softly. "It's all right. Don't be scared."

I looked for a person, or even a small animal, but saw none.

"Who are you talking to?"

She turned back, her sandals deftly marching back to the porch. She sat down again, facing the road and rested her head on her hand.

"The Big Bad Wolf," she said.

"Who?"

Make it go away.

Make it all go away.

She took her hand off her head and held it out, palm upward.

"The Big Bad Wolf."

"You know," I said. "I don't know if I'd get too close to the Big Bad Wolf. He ate the little pigs. He may eat you too."

"I'll fly away."

Can't you see I'm busy?

I'll do it tomorrow.

That's what you said last time.

Just let me do it.

I studied the child closely.

"Aren't you afraid of him?" I asked.

"No," she said, shaking her head. "He's my friend."

"Your friend?"

No, everything is not OK.

You're not listening to me.

"You know," I said. "I don't know if I'd get too close to the Big Band Wolf. He ate the little pigs. He may eat you too."

"I'll fly away."

"Fly away?"

"Ye-s," she said, in a sing-song voice.

"Little girls can't fly!"

"You can with Peter Pan. He makes you fly. He can take us all to Neverland!" She reached her arms into the sky, with outstretched hands, blinking, squinting once again into the sun.

I promise to listen.

"Besides," she said. "He can't hurt me. Not while Jesus is here."

"Oh," I said casually. "You know Jesus, do you."

"Uh-huh. He's my friend."

"He's everybody's friend, from what I hear."

She did not answer.

"Is Jesus here right now, in the yard?"

"No," she replied thoughtfully. "He's in the sky."

"When is he coming?" I asked.

"In a minute."

"Well, you'd better tell him to hurry up. It's getting dark."

She looked at the sky, which was beginning to darken around the edges.

"Jesus is always late," she said.

"Late?"

She looked at me sharply, for the first time.

"He's *very* busy."

Open the door and let me in.

I stand at the door and knock.

Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in.

Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house down.

He who has an ear, let him hear.

"So, what if the Big Bad Wolf comes before Jesus gets here?" I continued.

"He won't," she answered, confidently. "He doesn't come out of the trees."

"Why not?"

"He's afraid of Jesus, 'cause he knows he's been bad," she explained.

"What about Satan?"

She stared at me blankly.

"Never mind."

She jumped to her feet.

"I have a story." She licked her lower lip, a strand of hair blowing over her eyes.

"Go ahead," I said.

"There once was a little girl named Sebastian," she began.

"Wait a minute," I said. "Little girls aren't named Sebastian."

She raised a finger in the air. "This one is!" She turned her back on me and began again.

"She tried with all her might to catch a fish. It was very hard. She wanted a fish so she could learn to swim. But the fish wouldn't tell her how. 'Cold feet! Cold feet!' That's all he said, all day long. One day a fire came and burned the fish up. So she called Jesus. He was very busy fighting a war."

"A war?"

"Yes, a war in the sky. I am absolutely sure."

"Absolutely sure?" I said. "Now there you go again"

"The Big Bad Wolf had tried to eat the sky/"

" - using phrases you don't understand - "

"You wouldn't believe it if you saw it! I cannot tell a lie."

" - why do you do that?"

"'Verily,' he said, 'I think it might rain. Noon and night the clouds float by.'"

"*Noon and night?*"

"You must be precise."

"You don't know what 'precise' means." She whirled around.

"QUIT INTERRUPTING MY STORY!"

She paused, before beginning again.

"Jesus said, 'Now, you know that's not right. Tell me why you act so.' All of a

Open the door and let me in.
I stand at the door and knock.
Not by the hair of my
chinny-chin-chin.
If anyone hears my voice and
opens the door, I will come in.
Then I'll huff, and I'll puff,
and I'll blow your house down.
He who has an ear, let him hear.

sudden, he said, 'Stop!' and there was peace throughout the land. The Big Bad Wolf was very sorry, but he knew it was something he had to do."

"Then what?"

"They all went to Neverland, and they all lived happily ever after."

Think of happiest things.

Why, the better to see you with, my dear.

It's the same as having wings.

Why the better to smell you with, my dear.

*Think of all the joy you'll find
when you leave the world behind
and bid your cares goodbye.*

You can fly!

"Why would Jesus and The Big Bad Wolf want to go to Neverland?" I asked.

"Jesus lives very close. He could walk. Jesus can walk on everything, even clouds."

There was silence. She stood up and walked across the yard.

I followed.

She hopped up on to the curb, her sandals clinging to the raised concrete.

"I know a story about you ..." She took a deep breath.

"Once there was a big person," she began, before I could say anything. "And the big person said the Peter Pan, Make me into a baby." So Peter Pan did, and the baby cried, 'Wah, wah, wah. I wish I was big.' And the baby was sad. So sad that he climbed a tree. But he fell out, and the doctor gave him some candy. The candy made him big again."

"Not that he was big, he said, 'I'm going sailing.' But his boat had a hole in it. He said, I need money to fix my boat, but he didn't have any money. So he floated to the bottom of the sea and found a mermaid. 'You can do whatever you want to do,' she said. 'Call me when you get off.' Then there was a loud noise ... BOOM! ... like a firecracker, and the man thought he

was going to die."

I don't want to grow up.

Hey Little Red Riding Hood ...

Seek and you will find.

I'm counting to ten.

One, two, three ...

"It was an airplane to take the man out of the sea. He quit frowning. He was glad to be home."

She looked at me, dramatically. "The E-nd."

The cicadas had begun to chirp.

"It's getting dark now," she said. "I have to go inside."

Where do you go?

"I understand," I said.

Where do you go?

"Will you be here tomorrow?" she asked.

"I might."

Take me with you.

"I'll tell you a story."

"I like your stories."

I heard a slow rumble, mounting in the distance.

"It's a train," she shrieked. "Here it comes!"

Think happy thoughts.

The whistle blared.

"I can hear it!"

You're lighter than air.

We stood, in the near-darkness.

"Look," she cried. "It's the caboose!" I looked.

When I looked back, she was gone.

I walked back to my car.

*If you don't know the rules
do you have to play by them?*

*We'll play the game,
just you and me.*

Who is the time-keeper?

Where is the rule-maker?

I'll count to ten again.

Hide yourself well.

It's Easy to Miss

by T.S. Ballew

It's easy to crave things we miss so much.
Feeling the romance and the tender touch,
Of one who delights you and lights your fire,
And leads you away with their soul's desire.

A comforting hand placed inside of yours
Reveals the promise that this love endures
Yesterday's good times, and hardships to come;
Everything you have worked for and become.

Love soars beyond all good sense and clear sight.
It leads you floating between wrong and right.
With one gentle touch and a caring glance,
All seems forgotten; you're left in a trance.

Strolling so sweetly upon the great plain
Memories will lead down that peaceful lane.
It's easy to miss (without special eyes)
That love is a journey, and not a prize.



Anna Argo



Katie Henry

Fire Brick Wall

by Brian Woodham

I sit everyday on a fire-red brick wall
That has coarse crevices that where
I can balance without threat of a fall
I wear sunglasses so that I can peer
Into others eyes without revealing mine
They know quite well that I am watching though
That with sudden shooting glances my way
They avert their eyes quickly for they know I see

I sit and watch the nameless faces
With no shining inner aura exuding
From their seeming play-doughed bodies
It's as if they were squeezed into a ball
And thrown to the hands of inartistic wolves
Some are plump with round shaped heads
And beady eyes that are crying to get out
I wonder sometimes what runs through their minds
As they sit grooming themselves in the mirror
Reassuringly speaking words of growing confidence
And the importance of their unique inner beauty
Then I wonder who taught these people how to dress
And why they don't know that plaid shirt with
Striped pants held up with a brown belt cuffed at
The bottom over a pair of black shoes
DON'T GO TOGETHER!!
I chuckle softly while shaking my head and reach
For the cup of Irish Cream coffee with steam
Raising over my lip to my nose and adhering
Itself against my eye's outer lenses fogging up
Any chance of seeing their reaction to my laughter
I slowly wipe my sunshields while squinting

My eyes against the glaring sun and frosty eyes
Having adequately done so I reach into my
Crumpled cardboard carcinogen cancer carrier and
Retrieve the cylindrical cough causing stick
Which compliments perfectly my morning coffee
I carefully light my cigarette with a wooden match
I prefer the natural taste the crimson tip gives
I glance up again surveying the sundry scene
And take notice of a beauty the likes I have
Seldom seen scampering through my vulture vision
An artist having acquired the insurmountable seeds
Of a carefully crafted dough of exceptional
Quality that is not found on most people's plates
She controls discreetly every minuscule movement
Her sensually swaying of a hypnotist's watch
She glides ever so gracefully across the path
Every eye turning towards her to catch a glance
Her skin seems of a pulsating passionate love
That would stand the tedious test of time
All these things I soak into my sight blinded eyes
As she disappears around the corner to another guy
Another drag puff and swallow as I descend
The fire brick wall burning her soul into mine
A touch would delay my soul's long climb
Knowing that to know her would shatter perfectness
I turn and walk fast in the other direction
Keeping with me the boundless picture of beauty

LEARNING *That Save*

From left to right, Auburn firemen -- Matt Williams, a sophomore in business management; P.J. Holley, a sophomore in civil engineering; and Mike Roux, a senior in management information systems -- earn their way through school by participating in a city fire department program.



es Lives

by Nick Huston

ON CALL:

Some Auburn students pay their way through school while protecting the community.

Photo by Camie Young

When a fire alarm rings in Auburn some Auburn students drop their books and rush out the door, not because their dorm is on fire, but because they're on call and it's their turn to fight the fire. The students are part of the Auburn City Fire Department student firefighter program.

"If you're looking for a challenge," Ben Chappell, sophomore in marketing, said. "This is the place to be." Chappell graduated from recruit school last summer.

The Auburn City Fire Department is one of about 30 fire departments across the country that offers the student firefighter program.

In 1989, City Manager Doug Watson suggested the student fire-fighting program after seeing a similar program, while an undergrad, at the University of Maryland.

"The program helps the students and helps supply Auburn with quality and physically fit firefighters," Watson said. "It's good for both."



In order to qualify for the program students must go through an orientation and pass a physical training test. Then, each applicant must go through an interview. The number of students accepted varies from year to year depending on the number of spots open.

"We could have as many as 50 students show up for 20 spots," Capt. Jimmy Brown, training coordinator, said. Training lasts for 2 1/2 months at the Fire-fighting Academy in Opelika. During training, recruits begin each day with a PT test. The test lasts about an hour requiring students to stretch do aerobic and anaerobic exercise and strength conditioning.

"It's pretty strenuous, and you need to be in good shape," Chappell said.

After the PT test recruits have an hour before they are to report to class at the Opelika training center. Class normally lasts eight hours but can be as long as 12.

"If you're late twice in recruit school you're out," Brown said.

At the beginning of each week recruits take a written test over the information from the week before. Recruits are given two chances to pass the tests if they do not they are out of the program. At the end of recruit school students must take one more test administered by the state to receive state certification for firefighter one and

two, first responder and hazardous materials.

"If you can't take it from the book and use it in the real world, you're no good to us," Brown said.

When a recruit graduates from recruit school they are to take at least 10 hours of class and keep a 2.5 GPA in order to stay in the program and be reimbursed for tuition. The department pays full in state tuition and a third of out of state tuition. Students are also paid starting at \$5.35 an hour. Tuition fees and salary comes out of the departmental budget.

"The pay's not great but after four years of school I'll end up in the black," Joseph Donaldson, sophomore in secondary education, said. "You can't beat that." Donaldson is on his second year with the department.

"They're flexible around your school schedule and it's a good study environment," Chappell said. "You come to the station and eat dinner and study."

"It's nice when you have a city that is willing to spend a lot more money on quality of life issues," Lawrence said. "We're able to provide a sound basis for sound work."

In addition to taking classes, students work every third day, Monday - Friday 5pm until 7am and if a shift is on Saturday or Sunday it's 24 hours 7am until 7am. Every 2 years, students are to work the day shift 7am until 5pm.

The pay's not great, but after four years of school I'll end up in the black. You can't beat that.

Joseph Donaldson, sophomore in secondary education

"That's (day shift) where you do most of the cleaning and learn the day to day stuff," Ben Harris, junior in building science, said.

Harris is on his third year with the department.

"Once you come on shift the city teaches you," Donaldson said.

"You learn the city maps, road block numbers and how to drive the truck."

Students are also given the opportunity to stay at the fire station if there are open beds.

The only catch is they must obey the rules. No girls, they can't come to the station drunk, they have to help clean up the station, wake up is at 6:30 and 10pm is quiet time. Two or three from each class spend about six months to a year in the station.

According to Curtez Lawrence deputy of public safety about 200 students have gone through the program. There have been about five or six women to come through, Brown recalls.

"The program also helps keep them out of trouble," Lawrence said. "They form a bond with each other. It gives them something positive to do."

"It's kind of like a fraternity," Chappell said. "You enjoy coming to work."

"All of us benefit when these folks graduate," Lawrence said. "They go on to do whatever they want, but they've been apart of government and they know how it works."



Love Letters

by Sara Hyder

Where do you come up
with such words as "wanton" or "entwining", "sweeping", "cherished"?
The dialect goes on and on...

**Writing letters to make me
swoon?**

How dare you attempt such a feat!
The moment the words fall on the
page, I assume to greet them
as **lies**, simple distractions of linguistics.

Clever boy you are, **but I see through the paper and ink.**
I'd like to you to know the pen is not mightier than my heart.
I will not be manipulated by phrase and verse...
"gazing upon my angel's face"
"memories to keep me warm"
"like chocolate melting in my arms".

What do you take me for?
A lovesick, innocent girl who
will fall for your boyish charm and well write?
I think not!

I fell long before the first stroke of the pen.

Excess Amounts

by Keisha M. Oldacre

My husband Richard is asleep on the other side of our king-size bed. He's on his back with one arm hanging off the edge and lips separated just enough to see down inside his mouth. It's dark and shadowy in there. A bird is chirping outside the bedroom window but the sky is still black. A brown-orange bottle of medicine is sitting on the bathroom counter. It's half-full of a tasteless, numbing liquid. A neon green sticker is wrapped around the bottom of the bottle, with the words: "WARNING: Do not take more than recommended dosage. Excess amounts can cause serious injury or fatality." I think about how easy it would be to empty the clear liquid into the glass of water on his nightstand. I could just pour it in, shake it around clinking ice cubes, and wait on him to down it.

What he does with the marriage counselor is lie. It's a game he likes to play with people. He tells her his dad and stepmother made him do freaky things with them when he was a kid. He tells her his mom was a crazy bitch. One of his favorites is the one where his mom backs her boyfriend over the stove with a knife, swearing she'll slice his balls off the next time he lets a woman cut his hair. I know it's all lies. I never tell her, though. He thinks it's our little secret, but really, I don't tell because I like his stories. They give me the best ideas. Last week he told her that his sister tried to throw the hair dryer in

his bath water one time?only he doesn't even have a sister. Every now and then, he confuses his stories and she catches him. I laugh when this happens. Dr. What's-her-name hates that and looks at Richard with a pouty face -- like she knows it must be so hard to live with a woman who doesn't understand him. That poor woman, with a big fat Ph.D. and she doesn't know shit. He hates sympathy. He clinches his teeth so tight you think the Cherokee bones in his jaw are going to break skin.

Richard turns onto his side and faces the wall. His legs are stretched out the length of the bed, long and curvy. In the nine years we've been married, they have never changed; the one thing I noticed from the very beginning that was real. He used to wrap them around me when we had sex. It was plain sex then. Just a bunch of different positions but nothing else. He only wants kinky stuff now. Not good kinky, but really weird things. He has no idea the thoughts I have right after I cuff him to the bed. Knives in the kitchen. Plastic bags under the sink. He wants me to hurt him. "Slap me, beat me, make me bleed." He wants me to make him scream. Practice makes perfect.

I want to scream when I see him watching that damn movie. Richard's favorite actor is Jack Nicholson and *The Shining* has become his religion. He watches it every Sunday night, hunched over the edge of the couch, excited and amazed, like I get when they show nasty sports injuries on TV. His left eye starts expanding and constricting and the right one, that's the glass one, sits calm and peaceful, not even watching, but looking in another direction. There aren't any funny parts in the movie but he laughs through mouthfuls of popcorn the whole time. He

I know it's all lies. I never tell her, though. He thinks it's our little secret, but really, I don't tell because I like his stories. They give me the best ideas.



James Williams

laughs when Jack calls his wife a "fucking cunt." He laughs when Jack chases his wife down hotel hallways. The crazier Jack gets, the more he laughs. Sometimes I walk up behind him and he's talking to his index finger like the kid or staring in the mirror like he does see something in there. It gets to the point when I can't tell him from the movie.

One day, I got home from work before he did. It was almost shorts weather. I changed clothes and pushed the VCR's play button to start my Jane Fonda workout tape. I was bent over, trying to touch my toes, when screaming and crying and splitting wood jerked my attention to the t.v. screen. It was the scene where the wife and child locked themselves in the bathroom but Jack was just busting through the door with an ax. "Come out come out wherever you are," Jack was saying. The wife was wailing and freaking out. He was almost in, face stuck through the shattered door, grinning, saying, "Here's Johnny." The look on her face pissed me off. I hit the eject button, took the tape out to the driveway, and threw it on the asphalt. Over and over, I listened out open windows to the sound of plastic crunching and grinding under the left-front tire.

Neighbors looked at me like I was the crazy one. They looked up from flowerbeds, turned from lawn mowers. I wanted to line them up on the driveway. Shut their mouths with black rubber, because they never see or stare when Richard loses it. Like that day two December's ago when he tried to keep me from leaving. I had just backed out of the driveway when he threw himself across the hood of the car. His arms were spread out on the windshield. His palms were suctioned to the glass and white?completely delirious, and it was hilarious to him ... but really pathetic. This beg grown man dangling on the hood of a car, yelling something, but I don't know what. I think he hoped I would run him smack into a telephone pole. I swerved left and right until he slid off the passenger side. For as long as I could see, I watched him standing on the side of the road all by himself. No neighbors.

That was the same day I started studying him. We had been fighting all day. His voice was rising and falling like a revival preacher; like he had all these dramatic monologues stored up inside and all he had to do was play the right one. The more I yelled back, the more excited he got. Sweat drops kept building over his upper lip.

Every few seconds, he stuck out his tongue and licked them off. Wrinkles in his forehead moved up, down, together. I wasn't even listening but thinking about how I wished he would just run over and pop me in the mouth. Give me something to show people. Give me a reason I could put my finger on. A strong defense. But violence is not what he likes. He likes the intensity of rage filling up a room; the harshness of curse words flowing like people speaking in tongues, shocked faces. It has to be a production, like he's a big-shot director on a horror movie set. As if he should shout, "Nice work, take a break. Get some water and come back ready to scare the hell out of people!" He thinks he scares me.

I wouldn't fight with him today. He was calling me everything, but I kept reading my book. He made fists and I thought that maybe he'd just hit me and shut up, but he didn't. He walked around the bed so many times he must have gotten dizzy because I was getting dizzy. The he leaned his head down sideways so our eyes crossed and yelled, "Look at me you fucking bitch. I'll kill you in a heartbeat you fucking slut." I laughed inside. Threats are good. Motivation. But I wish I had these things on tape so people could know him past his b.s. Play it somewhere real quiet; maybe at church when everyone has just put the body of Christ in their mouths. I thought about

leaning over and screaming as loud as I could in his ear so he couldn't hear his big bad voice anymore. I could see swollen tonsils in the back of his mouth. I wanted to reach in and tear them out' make him choke on blood if he still wants to yell. He jumped back and ran to the other side of the bed. He opened the bottom drawer of his nightstand and pulled out the pistol. "I'm going to kill myself if you don't listen to me." I could see him out of the corner of my left eye, standing on the other side of the bed and holding the pistol up to his temple. I wished he would stick it in his mouth. I was staring straight into the bathroom at the bottle on the counter. WARNING! Excess amounts. Fatality. I knew he wouldn't do it.

The sky has turned purplish-black. I can see the pond out the window. Mist is lying on top of it. I could throw his body in there. No one would suspect it; it's too obvious. Or it'll at least take them a while, I'm thinking as I push down and twist the way the directions on the top say. I feel the little ridges that help you get a grip and then it's off. The bottle is open. It's more full than I thought. I tip it so the liquid runs down the inside wall and lands in the water. It's beautiful. You can't see a thing. Clean and pure. Quiet. I peel the green sticker off, wrap it around my ring finger, and lay down to rest.

I wasn't even listening but thinking about how I wished he would just run over and pop me in the mouth. Give me something to show people. Give me a reason I could put my finger on. A strong defense. But violence is not what he likes. He likes the intensity of rage filling up a room; the harshness of curse words flowing like people speaking in tongues, shocked faces.

October 1996

I loved to drive-

Windows down, hair in the wind, radio blasting.

Those days, I was free.

The moon and the stars were mine,

And it didn't help that you were too.

I loved to sit-

Cross-legged, bare-legged, Indian-style;

And look at you with your old-man face and your
young-man smile.

I loved to laugh-

Loudly, softly, uncontrollably.

You made me so happy,

You made me so free...

I couldn't help it, but

You made me me.

by Mary Catherine Barganier



Chair in Red
Callie Drake

Chair in red



Epherium
Katie Parker

Ryan Lee: Modern Day Phoenix

by Andrea Hardage

THE BEGINNINGS

Born with the name Audlye Gaines, Ryan is a person with many stories. He is the sixth son and the ninth child of his father who has 14 children by three different women. His mother only had two children, Lee and his sister.

When Lee was two, his parents separated and he spent most of his time being raised by his mother.

"My mother is the center of my life; everything I do is a tribute to her," Lee said.

His mother has had the most influence in his life. She does have faults and Lee recognized this.

"She has failed many times more than a normal mother, but she has never stayed down. Despite adverse circumstances and events, she just continued to fight, and that has left a permanent mark on my life," Lee said.

Lee's father never played much of a role in his life. His father died when he was 15 and he said he feels they have gotten closer since then.

"I know it sounds strange, but after he died I just seemed to understand him and his position in the world more clearly than I ever did when he was alive," Lee said.

So, back to being named Audlye Gaines. Before Lee's

father had ever had children, he made a list of what his children's names were going to be. His third daughter's name was to be Roshanka. However, this third daughter was Lee's mother's first child.

"She (my mother) was damned if her daughter was going to be named Roshanka," Lee said.

So, before Lee's father had a chance to name Lee's sister, his mother named her Jacqueline, after Jacqueline Kennedy. This completely threw off his father's plans. So, when Lee was born, he took the name that had been planned for him: Audlye Gaines.

For the first two years of his life he was known as Audlye, but when his parents split-up, his mother changed his name to Ryan Lee. But, his father's side of the family still doesn't recognize the name Ryan.

LEE AND HIS FAMILY

Lee's mother is white and his father is black, which created some tension on both sides of the family.

Throughout his family's history, his family has endured a lot of disappointment and failure, and it continues to go on.

His father once ran 60th Street in Chicago, and once he died, his brothers picked up the torch. Most of the men in his

family are involved with gangs and three of his brothers have died because of this involvement.

The majority of his family is involved with drugs, either selling or using. "I know this sounds grim, but its family, and I have nothing but love for them," Lee said.

Lee is the first person in his family to go to college, and besides his mother, the first to graduate from high school.

He was born and raised in Englewood, which is a neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. His neighborhood is notorious nationwide. In 1995, Tom Brokaw did a report on how bad Lee's neighborhood was.

He was lucky to get into a public magnet school in a much better neighborhood, and unlike friends and neighbors, he was exposed to a world outside than what he was used to.

"I realized early that there was a better life than what Englewood had to offer, and so I became determined to get that life," Lee said.

Although he was determined, Lee said, "By no means does that mean I worked hard and pulled myself up by the bootstraps to escape the inner city."

He was very much a slacker in elementary and high school. He managed to pull straight F's

his sophomore year in high school and he considered dropping out, but he was able to get back on track and ended up at Auburn.

THE PLAINSMAN

Lee began working at The Auburn Plainsman one week after he started Auburn his freshman year in the fall of 1998. He began volunteering as a sports writer and then in the spring of 1999, he began to write for the campus section too.

Then in 1999, Lee became the assistant campus editor and in the spring of 2000, he became the campus editor.

Then, in August 2000 after interviewing with the editor-in-chief, he began writing the institutional editorials as the editorial page editor.

"I am very opinionated and have written some very strong columns, and so I think she (the editor) felt I would do well to represent the opinion of the paper," Lee said.

THE FUTURE

Lee has a few dream jobs that he hopes will fill his future.

First, he would like to be a high school history teacher in the inner city. He is a huge fan of history, and working in the public school system will give him a chance to influence the lives of children.

"I enjoy working with the youth, particularly underprivileged children, and being a teacher would be very rewarding," Lee said.

Second, he would like to be a writer for VIBE



Wendy Lee raised Ryan, a journalism student at Auburn University, and his sister Jacqueline, in the inner-city of Chicago. Ryan received straight F's his sophomore year in high school, but he has worked to rise above his circumstances and is looking toward a bright future.

magazine. The magazine covers hip-hop culture and minority issues, both of which Lee is interested in.

Third, Lee wants to be an anchor for NBC Sports. Bob Costas is a role model of his, and Lee feels NBC is "head and shoulders above its competition when it come to sports coverage."

And last, Lee's ultimate goal is to be an anchor for 60 Minutes. As an anchor, Lee would be able to do pieces that could make serious changes to society by doing pieces exposing the system and showing what is wrong with it. Lee knows this is a far-away goal and only about five people per generation achieve it, but Lee looks at it this way: "There is no reason Ryan Lee can't be one of those five."

ON A LIGHTER NOTE

Most people don't know this, but Lee is a pretty big jock! He enjoys playing sports of all kinds, but spends most of his time playing basketball or table tennis. He also loves volleyball and plays on a club team back home. During high school, he participated in football, volleyball, cross country, track, swimming and bowling.

Lee has hated all of his journalism classes. He didn't start taking any until he was a sophomore, and at that time he felt he already had a lot of experience from his time at the Plainsman. He failed JM 101 the first time around, didn't learn much from Beginning Newswriting and is slacking off now in Reporting. But, he is looking forward to Feature Writing because of the creativity it will allow him.

Lee hates all animals, probably because he thinks he is afraid of most of them. He had one cat and one dog when he was younger that he loved dearly, but both of them died if freak accidents. This may have traumatized him.

His biggest fear is being imprisoned for something he didn't do. He has always had this fear and thinks there are some psychological explanations for it. Although he doesn't do anything illegal, he figures he will be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

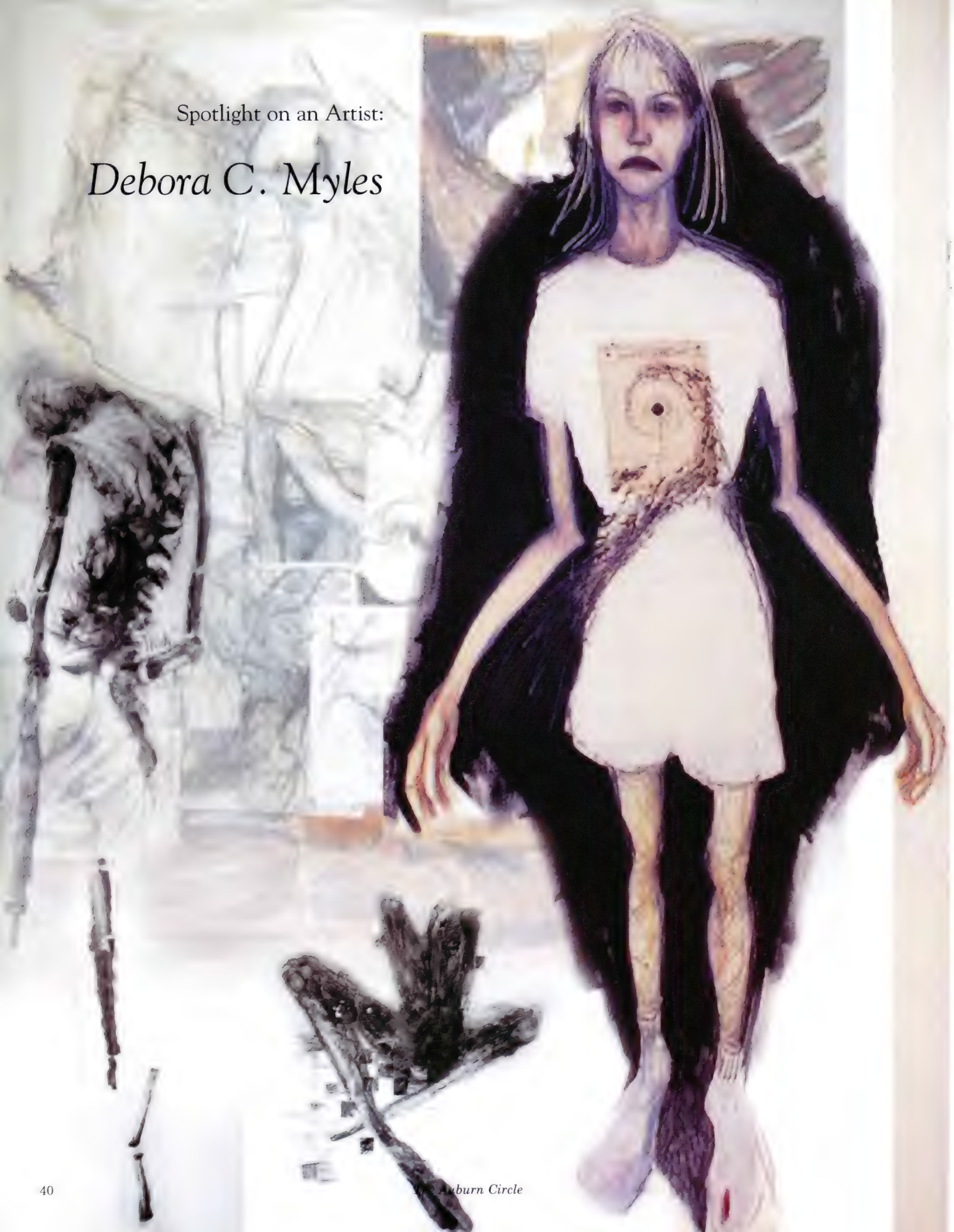
"Most of my friends and family were confined to the wrong path, so I just figure it is just a matter of time before I join them," Lee said.

All in all, Ryan Lee just wants to change things for the reasons of corruption and ignorance. He wants to help those he can personally, and those he doesn't know through is work.

Lee said, "By no means am I a shepherd, but just a person tired of seeing things the way they are."

Spotlight on an Artist:

Debora C. Myles



Eating Disorders:

An Artful Expression



by Emily Webster

Debora C. Myles, an invaluable part of Auburn's Fine Art teaching staff, displayed her most recent artistic accomplishments in the Biggin Hall gallery this past February. The collaboration of mixed media and installation art comprised the exhibit, but its concept was the product of Myles's personal encounter with eating disorders (E.D.), for which the exhibit is named.

After graduating from Auburn with a Bachelor in Fine Arts, Myles shied away from artistic endeavors and became a fitness director. The void created by the inability to produce art in the fitness field was soon overwhelming, and in 1993 Myles graduated from Auburn again, this time with a Masters in Fine Art. Shortly thereafter, Myles became a permanent fixture in Auburn's teaching staff and plays a vital role in the education of Auburn's art students.

Preemptive of her E.D. exhibit, Myles examined the affects of cancer on the human body. She began to use her father's ashtray as her subject for sketches. These preliminary sketches soon morphed into appearing like dirty, diseased lungs. Haunted by the memory of her mother's deadly battle with cancer, Myles was hesitant to approach any artistic possibilities with the disease beyond these vague sketches. In 1994 these memories resurfaced when a close friend of Myles went under the knife due to cancer. Having survived the operation and left with

extensive scarring, Myles's anonymous friend agreed to let Myles contour draw her body as research for her cancer series. The cancer series allowed Myles artistic therapy while coping with her own emotional devastation.

"A lot of my work has an element of suffering," Myles states. This is apparent in her Experiment Red Series, the ultimate collaboration and the final stage of the cancer series, which expresses the idea of "art being important in the healing [process] for the victim." The artwork in this series was comprised of torso studies created out of consecutive layering of nonpermanent, rubber-like material and plaster cast shells of her own body. "Nonpermanent material is essential to my work," Myles says, insinuating the relation between the mortality and the biodegradable nature of the human body in comparison to the skinned torso studies she had created.

Almost immediately after what seemed to be closure on tragedy in her personal life, Myles noticed subtle changes in her youngest daughter. After a continual decrease in appetite and increased exercise, Myles became suspicious of the looming possibility that her daughter might be the victim of an eating disorder. Myles's daughter was given the diagnosis of Anorexia Nervosa shortly thereafter and the psychological turmoil of the disease once again drove Myles to find comfort and therapy in the



Having closed the door on the heartache of two diseases, both viciously malignant in nature, Myles hopes to begin anew. As her next project, Myles is considering delving into the issue of plastic surgery. She says, "people she knows are starting to look fresh all of a sudden," and the notion of people changing their bodies for the sake of vanity is intriguing. Certainly whatever topic Myles brings to life in her art next will be handled in the same beautifully macabre and hauntingly symbolic manner in which she has handled her other exhibitions. For now, though, she is content with the success of E.D. as an exhibit and is hopeful that those who view it will receive its message

midst of her art.

As her daughter's eating disorder escalated, Myles began collecting the hair from her family's brushes (as it is an effect of anorexia to lose your hair from malnutrition) to incorporate into her work, as if wanting to hold on to something that was being lost from her daughter. She also began drawing adolescent girls and accentuating and elongating features of the body to mimic that of her daughter's to show the affects of anorexia on the body of a child.

In addition to these numerous sketches Myles incorporated several mixed media elements to further the visual power of the pieces. Shooting targets were added to symbolize the targeting of minors by society to be physically perfect, which is propaganda reinforced by the media. Feathers encircle the target (located in the middle of the torso on the sketches) and lead out in to the black abyss that encompasses the figure. The feathers allude to the thought that the subject wants to fly away from herself, while the black hole is representative of Myles's daughter's description of what an eating disorder feels like physically and mentally. Lastly, the red drop on the feet and hands on some of the figures symbolizes the social crucifixion of imperfection in the human physical form.



*"Art is important in
the healing [process]
for the victim."*



If you or someone you know has an eating disorder or if you would like information concerning eating disorders please contact:

The American Anorexia and Bulimia Association
www.aabainc.org
(212) 575-6200

The National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders
www.anad.com
(847) 831-3438

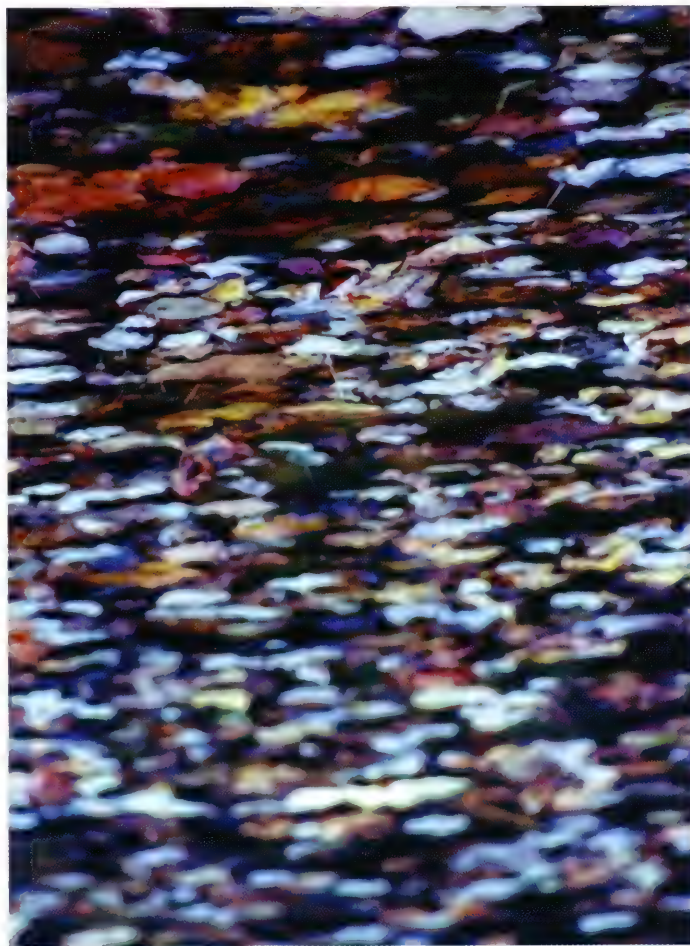
Soul Food

by Reggie Jackson

Do you remember the Sundays after church?
Do you remember those sweet-fresh days?

'Cause I remember them:

the many get-togethers
the background music
Grandma's warm-like voice
our smiles and laughter
followin' my Big Brother everywhere he goes
games and more games
Uncle Pete's storytellin'
fat-ball Fluffy playin' with yawn
sometimes my Sister's absence 'cause of homework
the display of old pictures
watchin' another of "Raymond's Run"
the greetings from visitors
sittin' on Pa's lap drinkin' cool lemonade...
But I liked the food the best:
fried chicken from the stove top
fresh white corn
Mama's favorite greens
green-yellow okra
potato salad
black-eyed peas from Nanny's garden
buttermilk cornbread
homemade ice cream
candied yams added with sugar
baked beans
mixed vegetables
fresh dinner rolls
Big Ma's pound cake
sweet potato pie...
all the time
durin' those sweet-fresh days
with my family
every Sunday after church



Julie Morris

Elysian Fields

by Thomas Phillips

Return with me to that
 Peaceful Pasture
where dandelions dance
 and the mind enters a trance
 in the Elysian Fields-

Do you remember it well?
 the gentle breeze
 the shade of the oak
 the honeysuckle's perfume
 in those Elysian Fields-

Return with me to that
 Luscious Lawn
where we sat in the sun
 until the day was done
 in the Elysian Fields-

Does the Lotus grow there
 in that sprawling expanse?
if there it shall be
 we will stay eternally
 in our Elysian Fields-

ZEN

and the Art of Being a Moron by Scott Gates

"Zen is not letting yourself be horsewhipped into words about it,
so as you read these words just unfocus your eyes
and stare at the blurry page."

-Jack Kerouac

When I received this quote from a friend, the first thing I did was re-read it.

That shows you where I stand philosophically. I posted it on the door of my fraternity house dorm room so I could see it every day (once again missing the point of Kerouac's message), and at one point I caught a neighbor of mine reading it, puzzled.

"How am I supposed to read this if I unfocus and it gets all blurry?" he asked innocently. It was at that point that he became enlightened. And that was my problem: I tried too hard. I couldn't just see the page for what it was, but had to find some deeper meaning within it. That pursuit of written enlightenment is pretty much what lead to what I'm about to tell you' the story's not pretty, so if you really want to get anything out of this page, I recommend you just unfocus right now.

I was in a bookstore in my hometown one Friday night with two friends of mine from high school. With Kerouac's suggestion racing through my head, I bee-lined to the Eastern Philosophy section and started desperately searching for that one book that would put me on the path to enlightenment. Unfortunately, I couldn't find anything but Westerners' thoughts on the matter, collected ??in essay form ??in a row of convenient little paperbacks. Defeated, I went back to the Literature and Fiction area, determined to buy a book.

One of the friends that I had come with was there, searching for some book on state history (a subject I was never a fan of), and before long, I had found something that caught my eye (interestingly enough

Salinger's *Nine Stories*, which is introduced by an old Zen koan. I'm always coming back to that somehow, aren't I?). Anyway, while we were rooting around there in all those authors' hard work, a girl we knew from school appeared, asking the generic, "Hi. How are you?"

Now this girl, Cathy, had somewhat decayed since last I saw her. She was covered in what looked like about five flannel shirts and it seemed that she had somehow forgotten how to bathe somewhere along the line. What's more (not that this is necessarily a bad thing, but I feel the need to mention it) I'd recently heard that she'd turned her attention away from the young men and had begun sowing her wild oats among those more like herself. So, yes, she was a practicing lesbian with neo-hippie tendencies and a bitter view of life with no one to really direct her bitterness towards. This is what will happen if you live with your parents too long. God bless my humble dorm room.

With all of this said, you could probably guess that her saying hello was more than nice enough, and that we could expect little else to come of the conversation. So we replied with a polite, yet hollow, "We're great, and yourself?" Only to be returned by a "Fine," upon which she turned around and walked away, in the direction of the *Dream Journal* section, no doubt. It's here that I wished the story ended, with you tossing the page down in disgust upon realizing that yes, you should have just done what I said and unfocused, and that this story really has no point.

Unfortunately, it's at this point that I

need to give you a bit of background information on the bookstore and its problems with people like Cathy (no, not lesbians, just the city's rebellious and bored youth). I had been by earlier in the year and bumped into yet another high school friend on the sidewalk. He was lounging about with a collection of scary looking people, one of which, who especially frightened me, was wearing Marilyn Manson contacts and a high-necked leather shirt. Any way, I was chatting with this guy when the police crept by in their woefully mis-dispatched squad car and blared through the bullhorn, "You are going to have to leave; loitering here is not tolerated." What the hell that was all about I had no clue, but I was quick enough to proclaim my innocence and slip away from my friend and into the store. I'm sure I was looking for some westernized crap on Zen that night, too.

To get to the point of that little flashback, I had noticed, on the "Night of Cathy" we'll call it, that there was a freshly posted No Loitering sign outside flanked by two of the city's finest. Apparently that kid with the devil contacts had been creeping some people out, and the bookstore just wasn't going to take it anymore. And I can testify to the seriousness of that statement. As I proudly trotted up to the checkout desk with Salinger tucked under my arm, I noticed that Cathy was involved in a heated discussion with a particularly large member of the book patrol, and that the conversation was not in her favor.

So here's an awkward situation for me in the making: do I make my presence known at the possible risk of involvement, or slyly investigate the situation from a short distance before moving in? Obviously, a bit of scouting was in order. I slowly jockeyed for a position at the Mother's Day gift ideas table, and eavesdropped in on the goings-on. Apparently, Cathy was being accused of trespassing, due to the fact that she had been asked to leave while outside, and had interpreted this as meaning that she was free to go shopping inside. Her argument was that she, being at the checkout counter with a

Unfortunately, it's at this point that I need to give you a bit of background information on the bookstore and its problems with people like Cathy (no, not lesbians, just the city's rebellious and bored youth).

newly purchased rice paper-covered Dream Journal, was a paying customer and, therefore, not at all trespassing. It was at this point that she summoned the manager, and it was at this point that I gleefully ran off to find the guys I had come with.

I told them what was going on and that I needed to wait a bit before braving the register line, but they insisted that I go ahead and pay so we could go down the street and see a movie -- after all, it was getting late. Not the response that I had been looking for, but I saw it as true enough, and as a sign that I would again have to confront Cathy, only this time not in the warm embrace of the Literature and Fiction section. So I quietly crept up to the checkout girl directly beside Cathy (her be-flannelled back was to me, thank God), and whispered that I needed to make a purchase.

By this time, the cop had escalated his threats, and was jabbering on about the coming squad car and the fact that if she was still around when they pulled up, she was going to go "downtown." I never really stopped to figure out all of what's involved in going "downtown," and I'm pretty sure Cathy didn't either, because she wouldn't budge. It may just be me, but if I've already bought what I came for and some sop starts telling me to leave, I'm going to leave. There's not much to debate about in situations like that. Her plea bargain with the manager had obviously failed, by the way, because all I could hear out of that poor woman was, "Well, whatever the police want to do we have to comply with."

Of course! When a man with a semi-automatic pistol on his hip and a shotgun itching to be used in his car tells you to move, you do it. Once again, I'd hoped that something like that would strike one as obvi-

ous. Well, soon enough it became obvious that Cathy was being arrested. Two slow-looking officers had sauntered in, skillfully whipping out a pair of handcuffs and casually ordering, "Put your hand behind your back, ma'am." Now I said that this would get awkward for me, did I not? Never in my life had I wanted to unfocus more and fade off into my surroundings, perhaps just finding myself reborn as a lilac-colored collection of poetry on the Mother's Day table ??but of course I was no where near enlightened enough at this point to achieve poetry anthology status. It was obvious that I would have to say something.

I'm sure it's not what Cathy would have wanted to hear at that moment, being such a rebellious young gal, but the first thing that popped into my mind to blurt out was, "Uh ... Cathy? Do you want me to call your parents?" She turned around (as best she could under heavy escort) and said no. "Well, do you need me to come 'downtown' with you?" I prayed dearly that this would not be the case ? the movie started in fifteen minutes, if nothing else. She once again turned me down, and said that her friend, Laura Anne something-or-other would help her out. Well God bless that little lesbian lover of hers for being around (take note, and I'm sure that all of you already have, that I assume just because she's a lesbian and is with a female friend, the two must be lovers. I apologize for my misconception; please know that I'm not all that shallow and yet again, the remark still remains on the page).

And with that she left, shouting over

her shoulder, "I'm a good person! You know that!" Well, yeah. I agreed. A lot of good that was going to do her now, what with her destination being "downtown" and everything. And yes, I joke about the situation, but let's slow down and actually look at what she's done for a minute. Here she is, a mere twenty-year-old, and she's getting arrested for loitering (somewhat belligerently, I might add) at a bookstore. She had no war to protest, and no cause to stand for. She just wanted to hang out at the bookstore for a few more minutes. Her valiant stand will not be written up in Sunday's paper. A movement for all of those that love books and the stores that house them will not rise up out of this. There is no phoenix for her ashes. Sad, but true.

Unfortunately, it seems that a lot of people my age are in her same situation and somewhat frustrated with, quite honestly, America's prosperity. True, I'm not about to say that everything is perfect in the world, but if you're hanging out at bookstores every night, you've almost got to search for something to complain about. That's where you go to read and drink coffee. There's no rebelling about it. But I can see that all of you have begun to unfocus now, sensing a political essay on the youth of America coming up, so I'm going to stop. My point is, simply: don't rebel if you don't have anything to rebel against. Stop trying to read what's on the page, and let it all melt together in one blissful, blurry smudge. This is not naiveté. This is enlightenment.



James Williams

by Lindsay Wedgworth

Soul Food

Collard greens or a Bible verse -- both types of soul food are Jeanelle Tyson. Her hard work, positive attitude, and inner inspiration make her the person she is today.

Behind the doors of Toomer Hall dormitory works a special woman. Some don't notice her. Some do. Those that do are sure to notice her positive attitude. Jeanelle Tyson knows what it means to work hard. She is the custodian for one of Auburn University's larger dorms. At 54, she is at a place in her life when she would rather be putting her own feet up than cleaning the floor where other people's feet walk.

She toils away, day in day out. She totes girls' trash up and down the stairs, up and down the sidewalk, to the dumpster on the other side of the building. She mops stairs so dirty that the stains remain even after Pine Sol's touch. Her shy smile and friendly "How are you doing?" make her an inspiration. How can someone be so happy when she is doing the things that most of us would rather not? What exactly makes "Miss Jeanelle," as she is so affectionately called, tick?

The answer lies in her soul. Tyson is a Christian. Every Sunday morning, Tyson and her husband, Willie, attend Ebenezer CME Church in Loachapoka, where they are both Sunday School teachers. Willie and Jeanelle enlighten 8- to 13-year-olds about God and the Bible. This week's lesson on Saul highlights how God wants heartfelt obedience from his followers, she says.

One former Toomer Hall resident, Amy Glass, says, "Whenever I was upset, Miss Jeanelle always told me everything was going to be OK and I believed her, because she was Miss Jeanelle."

Stella Dunn, Tyson's supervisor and close friend, says, "She's a spiritual person. We've been through a lot of hard times and grew together through Christ. She is a friend you can truly depend on." Dunn and Tyson became friends in 1974 when Tyson had her hands full with raising her niece, nephew and her own three children.

Jeanelle Tyson gets the food for her soul from her spirituality. Coincidentally, cooking soul food is her favorite pastime. "I love making cornbread, pork chops, turnip greens, stuff like that," she says, peering through her glasses.

Soul food wouldn't be soul food without loved ones to share it with. Luckily, all of Tyson's children and grandchildren are Lee County residents.

With retirement still four years away, Tyson dreams of the day when she can watch soap operas and play with her grandchildren all the time. "I'm going to sit down and rest a long rest," she says. Her youngest grandchild, Tykria Queal Tyson, is only three months old. When asked about Tykria's namesake, Tyson good-naturedly laughs and says, "I don't know why they named her that. I can't even pronounce it."

Tyson remembers her own childhood in Loachapoka. She says she always dreamed of owning a teddy bear. Sadly, she never got one. As an adult, Tyson began a teddy bear collection that grows bigger every year. "I started collecting them when I got married. Now I have 30 or 40 on my bed," she says.

Everybody seems to love "Miss Jeanelle." In fact, just last week a student whom she does not even know gave her a flower as she walked by on the way to work. Stephanie Brown, a Toomer Hall resident, described her as "above and beyond friendly."

Apparently, this is nothing new to Tyson. The first time her husband brought her to his parents' house, her future mother-in-law informed Jeanelle that she would be a member of the family before too long.

Tyson said one of her favorite days was Employee Appreciation Day when she worked at Drake Student Health Center. The health center gave her a large houseplant that day. Stella Dunn, who was also her supervisor at Drake, said that Tyson wept and said, "You know, they do love us, don't they?"

Collard greens or a Bible verse—both types of soul food are Jeanelle Tyson. Her hard work, positive attitude, and inner inspiration make her the person she is today. When asked what is her greatest strength, she pauses, props her head on her hand and says, "I try to do the best thing I know how to do at home, at church, or anywhere I



James Williams



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Hypocritical Man

by John Michael Hornsby

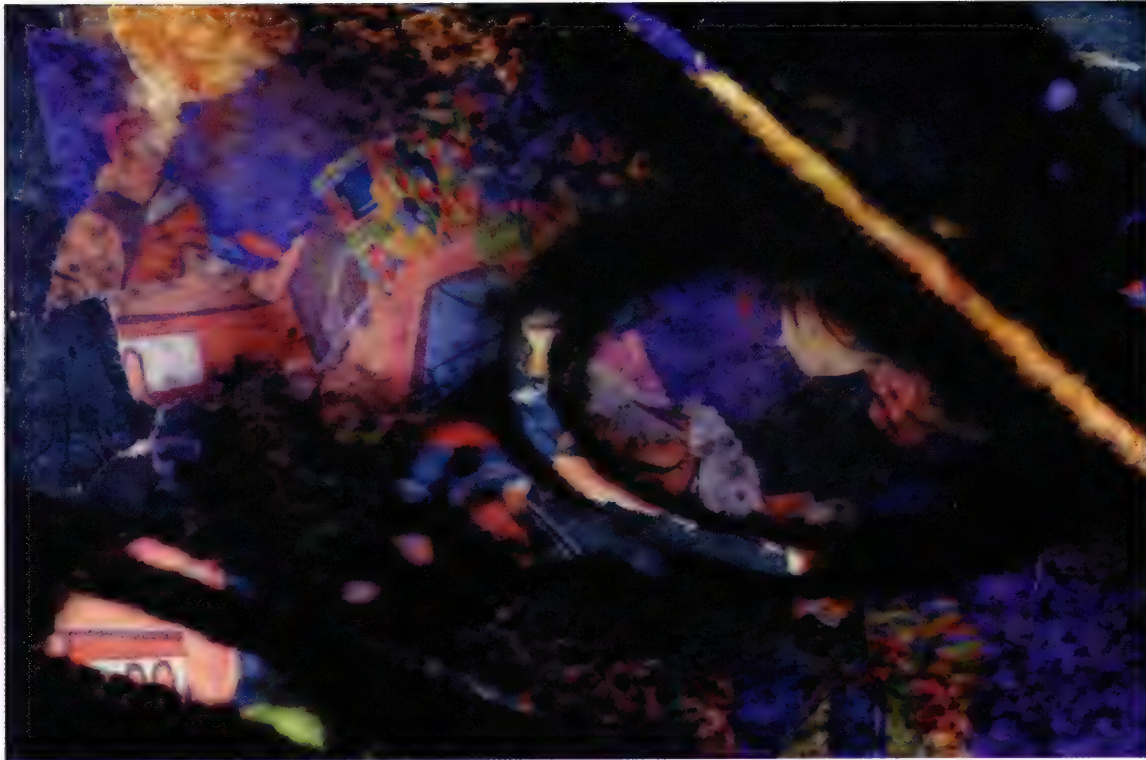
I say that I love His only begotten, and it's true I bear fruit, but my fruit is all rotten.
I wave my hands in the air and I shout Hallelujah!, then I walk out the door and I'm ready to do ya.
I live in a big house, it's built upon sand, there's no solid ground for a hypocritical man.

I've got a gift, I can see through my brother, but I'm blind in one eye and can't see out the other.
I smile to your face, while I put a knife in your back, I'm in the right race, I'm just on the wrong track.
When I'm not busy falling, so firmly I stand, right here in the shoes of a hypocritical man.

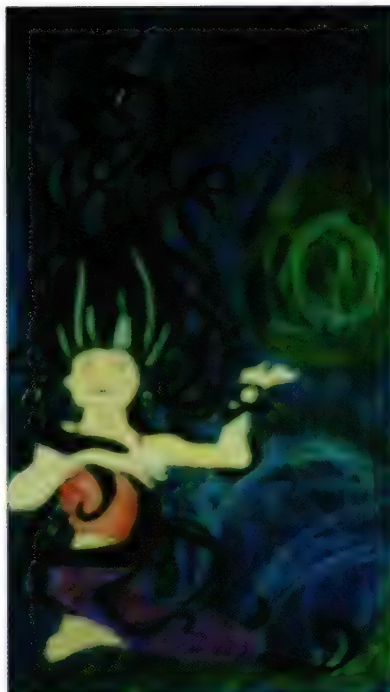
I swear to you I'm not into worldly pleasure, but I'm out digging for gold and searching for treasure.
I swear I'm against lying and stealing and killing, but if you get in my way, well I'm probably willing.
For the devil in me, I just can't understand, what in the world could make a hypocritical man.

I let everyone know that I'm into the Scripture, but while I'm reading the Word, I don't quite get the picture.
I claim to be led by the voice of the Spirit, but if He's speaking to me, well I don't really hear it.
God did call me once, but I turned and I ran, I was too busy being a hypocritical man.

To tell you the truth, I'm nothing but talk, if you look at me closely, you'll see the crook in my walk.
I look in the mirror, I don't like what I see, for there are lies in the eyes of who's looking at me.
And on Judgement Day when before Him I stand, He'll say, "I never knew you, you hypocritical man!"



Katie Parker



Mandy Morris



Mandy Morris

WORTHY

by Erin Simpson

In seventh grade, Howard Thomas had an upset stomach that almost killed him.

His doctor prescribed a new medicine called Compazine, but after taking the medication, he began having strange, uncontrollable muscle pullings around his face and neck.

The emergency room physician found that Compazine, the drug he was taking, caused this rare reaction in some people. He administered Phenobarbital to control the spasms, even though the recommended treatment was Benadril, a rare drug at that time.

The muscles relaxed immediately, but soon he had another, much worse muscle spasm. The muscles in his throat and mouth contorted and shoved his tongue backward into his air passage.

He was choking to death because his epiglottis had sealed up his throat.

He remembers looking out the hospital window "as the sun was setting and seeing green pine trees disappear into green spots on an encroaching blue background as I was passing out. I was thinking very clearly, 'Well, I am dying now.'"

As he lay there, knowing he could die at any moment, believing he is going to die at any moment, he realized that



Photo by Camie Young

Dr. Howard Thomas of the department of Textile Engineering is working on a safer, more comfortable bullet-proof vest.

the worst thing in life isn't dying. The worst thing is doing nothing of worth before death.

Now, Dr. Howard Thomas, saved from death by another quick dose of Phenobarbital, is assistant professor of Textile Engineering at Auburn University, and he is definitely doing something of worth.

In a few years, his research

and designs for bullet-resistant materials, snake-resistant materials, and fire ant-resistant materials will save thousands of lives per year.

Thomas began to study textile engineering at Georgia Tech, after the advisers in the aerospace engineering program he was enrolled in recommended that the students change

fields because aerospace engineering was declining. After graduating with a bachelor's and a master's degree in textile engineering from Georgia Tech and a doctorate in textile and polymer science from Clemson, Thomas was teaching graduate students at the Institute of Textile Technology in Charlottesville, North Carolina, when his students wanted to do something "different."

He started working on bullet-resistant material because he "felt that this was something very unique, and I wanted my graduate students to share it with me."

There are other reasons Thomas went into this area of textile engineering. His father was wounded in the arm and leg by a grenade in World War II. "I had to live with that my whole life," he says. "It changed the way I thought about textiles."

Also, the start of Operation Desert Storm affected his decision. Thinking about the men wearing at least 40 pounds of bullet-proof vest in 130 degree weather made him consider ways to make vests lighter and cooler.

Many men in Desert Storm, along with police all over the nation each year, died from gunshot wounds that could have been prevented if they had been wearing a vest.

There are two reasons they don't wear their vests, Thomas says. "Number one--they are stiff and they hurt police officers. And, of course, here in the South, it gets incredibly hot in the summer, and they don't have any air circulation."

Thomas' research is trying to fix this. "If we can deal with these two problems--not chafing and hurting the officer and letting air in and sweat out--then you're in a lot better position to wear it all of the time," he says.

After leaving the Institute of Textile Technology, Thomas came to Auburn in 1995 "to do more wide ranging research." He took a much greater challenge. He wanted to work with flexible materials that "would be not only pistol-resistant, but rifle-resistant too," he says.

"Rifle bullets are very much faster. They are double the speed and more of a pistol. The stuff that will protect you against a rifle is really heavy and hard to wear ... so most policemen

wear what will protect them against handguns."

If he could make a light, flexible material for vests that would protect against pistol and rifle bullets, police officers and the military and even hunters would have something to wear that would offer much greater protection.

After long hours of research, "I actually did some testing out in the field," he says. "We showed that this was a very valid concept. Early on, shooting a Russian military rifle, [the material] just blows the bullet completely apart. I knew I really had something there." Thomas has already filed for a patent on his new product, and now he is getting more supporting data.

He still will not call the new material "bullet-proof."

"There is absolutely no bullet-proof fabric. If you say something's bullet-proof, you're saying 'nothing can penetrate this.'"

"People are always coming up with other things," he says. Like "cop-killer bullets." Because of their design, Thomas' material probably will not work against these types of bullets.

"Some of the cop-killer bullets have a hard steel core. That means that they don't deform when they hit things. Most bullets are lead, and they deform when they hit a surface. It becomes easier to stop. A hard steel or carbide steel bullet doesn't deform, and so it continues sailing through. It can cut through a large amount of material before it really, seriously, begins to stop."

There are other reasons Thomas went into this area of textile engineering. His father was wounded in the arm and leg by a grenade in World War II. "I had to live with that my whole life," he says. "It changed the way I thought about textiles."

After his recovery from the drug reaction in 7th grade, Dr. Thomas made sure he would not live a meaningless life. He has overcome his obstacle. He will not die wondering if his life had meaning, had worth. He will know that he has accomplished already what many do not in a lifetime.

"The other thing they can do is coat these bullets with Teflon. Some types of vests that are woven can be separated between the threads where they're interlaced with each other. Teflon bullets can spread those threads apart and slide through."

However, because most of these bullets are illegal to own, Thomas cannot even test them on his new material. He must work with what he's got, but that won't stop the bad guys from using what they have either.

"That's the funny thing about criminals," Thomas jokes, "they don't seem to obey the laws."

Just because he can't practice with these bullets doesn't mean they won't be used against his material.

Another feature of Thomas' research is to stop all injury after the bullet hits the vest.

Most bullet-resistant vests in use stop the bullet, but they cannot stop the bruising and broken bones from the force of the bullet. Sometimes police officers still die from internal injuries from a gunshot, even if the bullet is fully stopped and does not enter the body.

Even our military is not concerned with this aspect of bullet resistance, Thomas says. The military has "a standard that's entirely based on weight and whether or not something stops a bullet, not whether the bullet is effectively stopped

and prevents injury.

"Eventually, yes [the military will use his design], because they're going to have soldiers dying. The first product that we are going to create is one that is cooler and easier to wear and prevents trauma."

Auburn University has been very supportive of Thomas' research, and it will definitely reap a huge benefit in the future. Auburn now owns the patent for the new material.

"When I came here, I signed the patent over to Auburn in exchange for two things," Thomas says. "First of all, they helped me with my [patent] lawyer bills, which were getting up to 30,000 bucks at the time. The second thing was they helped me to market it and get the information out. It worked out to be a pretty good deal for me."

It worked out to be a pretty good deal for Auburn too.

After a preliminary period in which the university and the inventor share the royalties 50/50 and 60/40, respectively, Auburn will get 70 percent of the profit.

According to Thomas, "It could be a multimillion dollar business ... the university stands to gain a good bit of money."

Also, Auburn will get national publicity for the invention, which will show the public that Auburn is worthy of their money.

Research partner Dr. Sabit Adanur of Auburn's Textile Engineering Department says Auburn truly benefits from Thomas' work. "He is a great advertisement for Auburn with his ballistic (bullet)-resistant projects. Besides, he is easygoing and very pleasant to work with," which helps any team project advance.

Thomas is a busy man. He stays on the phone at least three hours per day, discussing his research and his products. He teaches fabric design and fabric formation classes at Auburn in between his own hours of research.

He has served three terms as a Textile Engineering senator and worked on the program review committee and with the industrial extension group.

He is also married and has a 14-year-old son and spends what little spare time he has flying and learning foreign languages--he already speaks three.

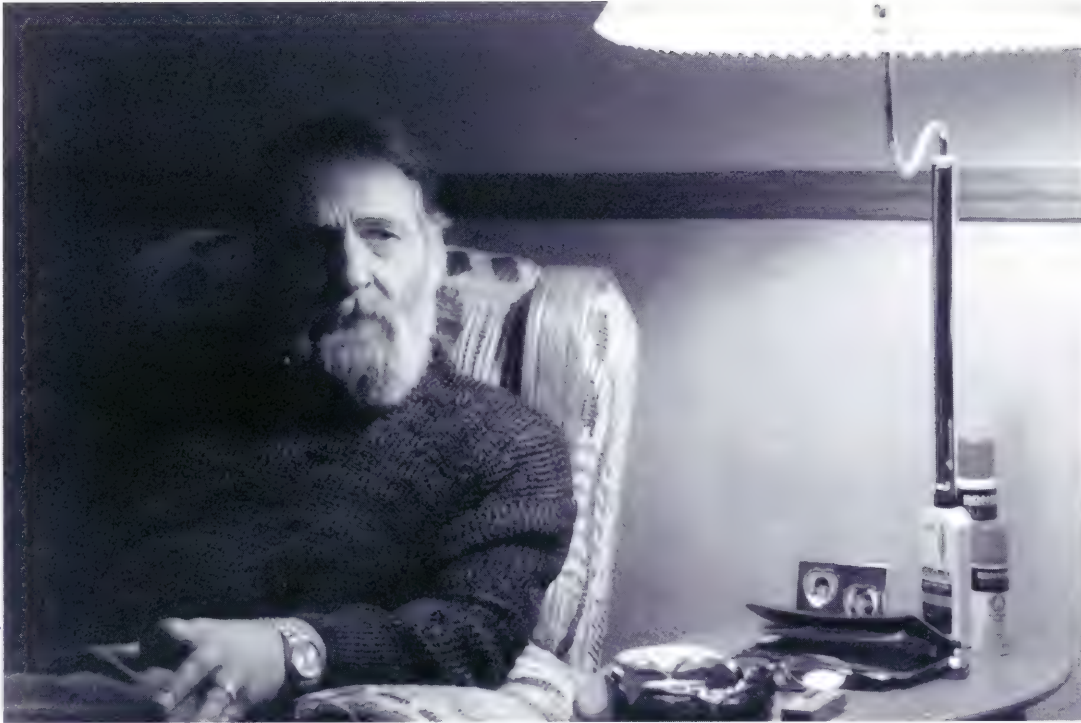
After his recovery from the drug reaction in 7th grade, Dr. Thomas made sure he would not live a meaningless life.

He has overcome his obstacle. He will not die wondering if his life had meaning, had worth. He will know that he has accomplished already what many do not in a lifetime.

by Laura Susan Bamberg

Letting Go

Photo by Julie Morris



As I look down the shafted hall,
my feelings are vague and oddly clarified all at once.
Scared to leave, yet impatient to go,
I want to succeed but think I might fail.
Four years of heartache, sleepless nights,
roadtrips, study sessions, parties and love's culminates
in one shining moment on an epiphany.
It is time to go and I am ready.
Not an ending and not a beginning.
I look through the golden shafts and hope
I leave my own footprints of light.



Art Extra v

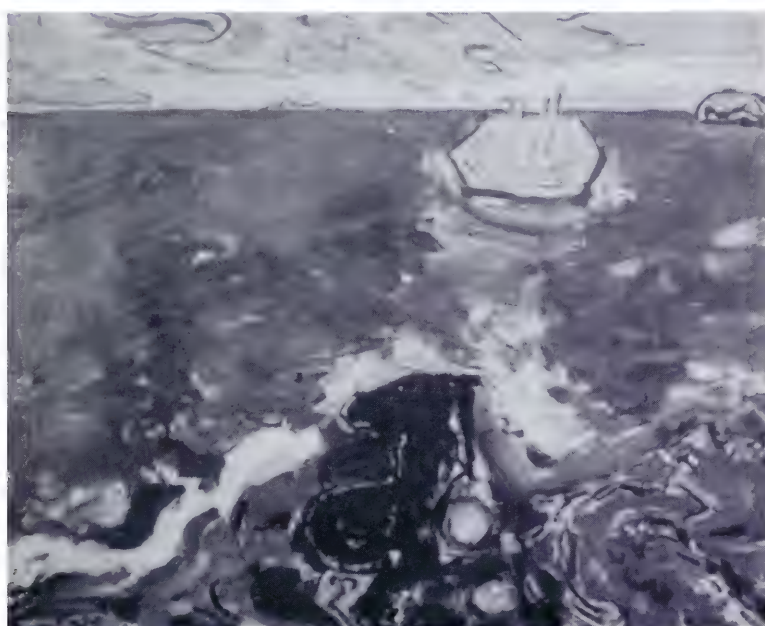
Nestled high on a knoll less than one mile from Interstate 85 lies the construction site of Auburn's newest addition- the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Art. The approved building plan will offer the amenities of a modern art museum featuring eight exhibition galleries, a gift shop, a restaurant, and an auditorium within its 40,000 square feet. The museum will rest on a site encircled by formal gardens that incorporate walking paths, water features, and the exhibition of large-scale sculpture into its own natural charms. The entire site will overlook a three acre pond and will highlight Auburn's permanent collection of American and European

art. The museum is scheduled to open in November of 2002.

The exhibition galleries are designed to compliment the internationally recognized permanent collection that includes one of the largest collections of the prints by the noted John James Audubon. Another significant aspect of the museum's collection is the 36 paintings and drawings that constitute the Advancing American Art Collection, which has been labeled by experts as one of the most important collections of American art from the post-World War II era. The collection includes many of the best examples ever executed by such well-known figures of the

The Jule Collins Smith Art Museum

nganza



Seascape, 1940
John Marin



Harlem, 1946
Jacob Lawrence

Night Heron, 1860
John James Audubon



American art scene as John Marin, Georgia O'Keefe, Ben Shahn, Arthur Dove, Ralston Crawford, Jacob Lawrence, and Romare Bearden.

Professor Nancy Hartsfield, Interim Department Head of the Art Department, is excited about what the museum will offer the students as well as the faculty. "It is crucial that the students see actual works of art instead of relying solely on reproduction," explains Hartsfield. "Students will benefit tremendously by being able to sketch from the original works of art." Hartsfield also emphasizes the important role the museum will play in art scholarship. "Faculty and visiting scholars will have access to

the museum's incredible art library as well as its collections of works-on-paper."

The museum also offers a varied and rich program of traveling exhibitions which are accompanied by educational programming that includes lectures by noted authorities, special symposia, guided tours and opening events. Saturday Cinema Nights will take place in the museum's auditorium and show classic, foreign, and experimental film. In May, the museum is taking a group of patrons on a 15-day tour of Italy. The following October, the museum will welcome Thomas Hoving, former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, as a part of the Littleton

Lecture series. Hoving will deliver a lecture on his experiences and his career to be followed by a book signing reception for students and faculty at the Auburn University Hotel and Conference Center.

Student memberships to the museum cost \$25 annually and include a membership card, free admission to the Saturday Night Cinema and Music Reception, a newspaper that includes announcements of exhibitions, special events, concerts, lectures and films, and a 10% discount on all museum gift shop purchases.

For additional information about the museum please call 844-1484



Gaiety in Times of Distress, 1943
Werner Drewes



Hunger
Ben Shahn

Anomie

by Michael McCollum

Anomie, my namelessness.

To have lost my way in

Modern Times-

With no place to hang

My weathered hat.

The vitality of the insignificant

Has yielded to the spiritless apathetic,

Like the gentle glowing candle,

To the throbbing fluorescent light-

And the beautifully inconsistent

Has lost it's meaning and sound-

For inaction and impotence prevailed

Over the heart buried in the local ground.

The mass migration to

The comfort of the middle-

A complacency with mediocrity

Only in politics is the middle ground

The independent thinker.

And you see me on your left,

With a bleeding heart

That is bound to hemorrhage-

For I'm a liberal,

So I must have no faith.

by Sarah Moreman

Crushed Petals

"You don't have to prove something to your classmates. You can just be yourself and not worry about how to say words clear enough to be understandable."

I was eleven the first time I saw Isabella cry. We were walking home from downtown. I watched as she picked a wild flower from the side of the road. Her long hair was covering her face. The wind was blowing the tall grasses in one wave, like the ocean when we went to the beach last summer.

My eyes were watching my fingers crushing the crisp petals into brownish-pink confetti. That was how I was feeling...being crushed into tiny pieces. Aware of my little sister's attention, I gave a deep sigh. She could tell that I was upset about something.

"Karen, do you realize how lucky you are?" Isabella's voice made me look at her.

"What do you mean?"

"You don't have to prove something to your classmates. You can just be yourself and not worry about how to say words clear enough to be understandable."

"Did something happen at school?" Isabella was staring at the ruined flower in her hand. She did not say anything. Not knowing what to say or do, I just walked on beside her. The sun was hurting my eyes, even though it was November. It was in the afternoon after school. We took this walk home everyday after school. We sometimes would stop by the ice cream parlor to buy an ice cream cone with the allowance our parents gave us every week. But not that day. Isabella did not say a word as we walked near the parlor, which meant that there would be no ice cream that day.

I did not want any ice cream, for they were there inside the parlor. It was hard enough to be around them in the classroom, and it would be harder to face them once more today. Why did they treat me like I was dumb?

I had just finished talking with somebody when I was told to be quiet. Why couldn't they see that I was aware of the bell ringing for class to start? That I was finishing up what I had to say? Sure, there were times that I forgot to listen for the bell. But that did not mean that I needed to be yelled at for being "loud." I was not the only one being loud; there were others who were loud too.

I wanted to know what had happened in school that made Isabella upset, and I knew that she would not tell me. I tried anyway.

"Isabella? What happened today?" She shook her head no.

I had made a loud noise from ripping a sheet from my spiral notebook. The teacher did not look up from talking, but the girl next to me was frowning at me. She mouthed that I was not to do that again. They did not think that I could hear at all, that I couldn't hear them talking behind me or scraping the chairs across the linoleum floor. I could hear sounds, but I could not understand what I heard.

Isabella opened her hand to let the ruined flower fall. The wind was blowing and the ruined flower flew away. Isabella stopped walking, and so I stopped too. We watched the ruined flower fly over the tall grasses until we could not see it anymore.

Todd was sitting three seats over behind me. I hoped that he did not notice how other people treated me. He was a new guy; he had been here only a couple of months. He was two years older than I was. Ever since he moved here, I could not help but like him. He was polite and good-looking. I always had a hard time being friends with boys because I did not know what to say to them. The boys never talked to me unless I talked to them; was it my deafness that made them not want to be friendly with me unless they had to?

My eyes darted over my shoulder to see if Todd saw the girl scowling at me. He did. Our eyes met, and I looked away. I felt small and I closed my eyes tight. The look in his eyes looked like pity, and he would not look away.

I heard a car coming behind us. Looking back, I saw a rusty red Chevy truck. It stopped next to us, and a cute guy with wavy brown hair laid his arms on the big steering wheel while staring at us. I remembered that his name was Todd and that he was in the same class with Isabella. Isabella talked about him sometimes, and so I knew she liked him. I met Todd last week while I was waiting for Isabella after school. He had asked me if I was looking for somebody and I told him that Isabella was my sister. He had smiled and said that he would be glad to give us a ride sometime soon.

"Hey ladies! Care for a ride?" His voice sounded nice and I looked at Isabella to see if she would say yes or no. But her face was red and her eyes were narrowed. Quickly, I touched her elbow to get her to look at me.

"He said that he would give us a ride home." Isabella looked confused, then nodded as if she did not want to admit that she did not understand the nice guy. She waited for me to climb in the truck before she followed.

Why was Todd giving us a ride? He must have a reason. I would not look at him, or he would have known how much the latest incident bothered me. It helped to have my little sister with me. He would not dare to say anything terrible about me in front of Karen.



Broken
Katie Parker

She would not look at Todd, I thought. What was going on? They were in a class together even though Todd was two years older. Isabella said that when Todd had moved here, he still needed a course required by our high school for ninth-graders. Pretending to be bored, I asked him where he was headed before he picked us up.

"I thought that you and Isabella might want a ride home. Besides, I wasn't going anywhere in particular." I glanced back to Isabella who was staring out of the side window at the tall grasses along the road. I knew that Isabella did not understand him. Making sure that she was still looking out of the window, I asked Todd if he knew what had happened earlier. Before he said anything, Todd leaned over to switch on the radio. A country song was playing as he whispered to me about what had happened.

"It was just that somebody was giving her a hard time for being loud, which she was not. I could tell that it bothered Isabella having somebody to shush her when she was doing the same thing as anybody else would have done." I was curious about his going out of his way to be nice to Isabella. Did he know that Isabella liked him a lot?

What were they talking about? I was curious. I hoped that Karen did not say anything about my liking him. I did not think that I could handle it if he laughed once he found that out.

"Wha' d'ya wa'? D'y wa' mo' fun ou' ofme? Gur 'hea'. Ma fulin' er ulrea'y hurt ennywag." It was frustrating the way I spoke, for my speech was at its worst when I was angry. Todd dropped his hands from me and took a step off the porch.

Todd pointed to a bird flying over the fields. "It's a red-tailed hawk," he told us. Todd was smart! It would be great if Todd asked Isabella out. Isabella really needed a boyfriend to be happy. She had it hard enough as it was. We were almost home, and I told Todd so. Once we turned into the driveway leading a long way to the house, I started to get my things together. I wanted to leave quickly, so Isabella would have thanks for both of us. Our parents always made sure that we thanked anyone who did something for us such as giving us a ride or even opening a door for us. I smiled. It was a good thing that Isabella was still staring out of the window; she would know what I was thinking if she looked at my face.

The truck stopped in front of our house with its big porch. Without saying goodbye, I climbed over my sister's lap to get out of the truck and ran inside the house. I slammed the door behind me. I went to the living room and looked out of the window.

Why did she leave in such a hurry?! Leaving me behind having to say the thank yous and goodbyes to Todd. Later, I vowed. I would get Karen and give her something to think about.

I watched Isabella thanking Todd, he who looked serious. Isabella was turning around and walking towards the house. I was about to turn away from the window when the driver's door of the truck opened and slammed as Todd ran after Isabella.

I felt strong hands clamping on my shoulders, startling me. I was twisted around to face Todd.

"Wha' d'ya wa'? D'y wa' mo' fun ou' ofme? Gur 'hea'. Ma fulin' er ulrea'y hurt ennywag." It was frustrating the way I spoke, for my speech was at its worst when I was angry. Todd dropped his hands from me and took a step off the porch.

"Isabella, I came by to give you and your sister a ride so I could get a chance to speak with you alone."

Even with my cheek flat against the window, I could barely see my sister and Todd on the porch. Still, I could hear what they were saying.

"Isabella, who cares what she thinks? You're doing just fine."

"Then why was she making faces at me?"

"That's her problem, not yours. Now would you like to have some ice cream? Karen's welcome to come along."

Then I heard my sister crying. All her fourteen years, she never cried and now it was because a nice guy told her not to worry about her mean classmates.

I walked to the door and opened it. I always thought that my sister was strong and brave because she was deaf. She did not cry when our grandmother died. She never cried when she talked about people giving her a hard time or making fun of her. I looked at Todd. Todd was staring at Isabella. He was standing perfectly still. His eyebrows were raised.

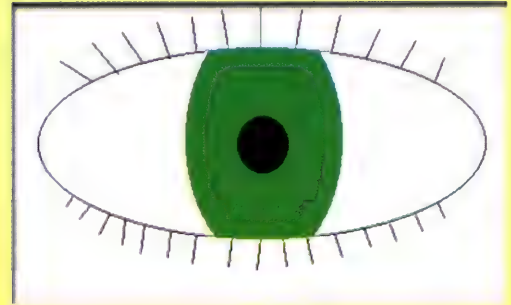
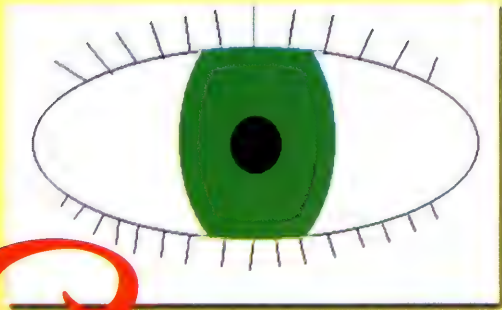
He must have known that I liked him. He knew what I was thinking when our eyes met in the classroom. And he asked me to go with him for some ice cream. Suddenly, this was too much for me to handle-having this guy going out of his way to make sure I was okay and then offer to buy me ice cream as if he knew that I wanted one but didn't because of them in the parlor.

"Isabella, are you alright?" She looked at me through her tears and nodded. She understood me without looking at me, proving that there would be times that my deaf sister would still surprise me. I looked at Todd and shrugged. Isabella wiped at her wet cheeks and smiled at me. I was surprised all over again. Was she crying because she was happy? I did not understand. I probably never would. Maybe she was just a normal fourteen-year old girl and I had a few more years to understand. Our mother said something about puberty making girls more emotional.

Todd really made my day by telling me what I really needed to hear. I was glad that he came by to take us home and that he would treat Karen and me to ice cream. Maybe I would have a guy to be friends with after all. Life seemed to be brighter now that Todd was here.

"Would you like to go with Todd and me to get some ice cream?" My eyes looked back to her face before I nodded yes. Great, we would have ice cream after all!

She understood me without looking at me, proving that there would be times that my deaf sister would still surprise me.



Eye of the Beholder



Graphic by Camie Young

The following section contains personal columns. The opinions expressed in this section are solely those of the authors. They are not the opinions of The Auburn Circle staff or of Auburn University.

by Lindsay Wedgworth

BECOMING "THAT GIRL"

A COLLEGE SENIOR REFLECTS

I never thought I'd be "that girl." Hell, I never even thought I'd like her. She was the boring one. I was the crazy cousin who visited once a year "just to be nice."

You know her-she stays home Thursday nights to "get a good night's sleep." She never lets her clothes hamper get too heavy to carry. She's never out of milk longer than two days. She calls her grandmother just to say hello. And here's the big one: She keeps a daily planner.

I am now "that girl." I guess growing up is what happens after four years of college. If you had told the 18-year old me I would be "that girl," I would have rolled my eyes and dismissed you as some fuddy-duddy with no life. Being "that girl" would mean I couldn't go to Tricia's Monday night hunch punch party or sleep till after lunch on Thursdays.

I have had some unforgettable times in college. My friends and

I laughed, cried and

partied our way through everything coming at us. When I came here, I had never met my true self. My slow metamorphosis into "that girl" has helped me meet her.

Since I've become "that girl," I've had to give up a lot. The first thing: jerks. I can't date them-I know what they're up to. And, the funny thing is, I can spot them now. They're often the utterly charming ones offering to "give me a ride home" or "buy me a drink."

Even though Auburn University uses it, no more "forgiveness policy" in dating for me. I now must use the baseball system (three strikes and you're out). I just struck one out last week. And I thought I loved baseball.

Being "that girl" means no more drive-bys. Drive-bys are the highly developed art of driving by a crush's house. My friends and I would load up the cars and tour Auburn most weeknights.

Now, it just feels

awkward-what did we want to see anyway? Plus, now I'm too busy working on my resume.

Being "that girl" means no more dancing on furniture. In my past life, I would be the first to boogie on the coffee table at parties. Now, the coffee table wouldn't even hold me.

Being "that girl" means a lot of things. But, there's one thing it doesn't mean: losing sight of who you are. I've learned there is always more than what is on the surface. I've learned to take charge of my life before it can take charge of me.

I will always miss the days before I became "that girl." Because so much is ahead, I will try not to look back.

Sure, being "that girl" isn't as much fun. Sure, I spend a lot of time with my computer. Sure, I get my oil changed on time. Sure, I don't know who is playing at Bourbon Street tonight. Sure, I lay awake some nights reminiscing old times.

But one thing I do know, "That girl" knows herself.

YOU SHOULD ASK

Some of you may nod your head in agreement when I say, "Smoking in a public place is an inexcusable, selfish act."

If you are anything like me, you cringe at the sight or the smell of someone lighting up a cigarette near you. The faintest whiff of the smoke makes my stomach churn and my head ache; it is probably a mental thing. It infuriates me when someone lights up a cigarette in front of me without asking first if I mind or not. I do mind. It is my air too that they are polluting.

But why, you might ask, do I have the right to get so annoyed? I am a cancer survivor. I had Hodgkin's disease at the age of 14. I have been off treatment for five years, and therefore I am considered cured.

Hodgkin's disease is a type of cancer that is caused by environmental factors, but the specific factors remain unknown.

I have fought hard for my life through rigorous chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

Why should I be exposed to this cancer-causing agent when it can easily be avoided? I have had cancer once,

and I don't want it again.

I love to go out on the town and have a good time, but I dread walking into a smoke filled bar with the smoke so thick it is like a dense fog.

There is a trick to dodging dancing, drunken people's lit cigarettes.

I am absolutely disgusting when I come out of the bar reeking of cigarette smoke with my eyes burning and my head aching. Or, when I take a shower the next morning, as soon as the water hits my hair, it enhances the lingering stench from the night before.

I have never understood the whole concept of having to smoke a cigarette while drinking, maybe because I have never been a smoker. Because I don't smoke and have never smoked, I feel like I will never understand a smoker's point of view. But I have already experienced some of the horrible things that they may have to go through because they smoke.

It baffles me that someone would do something that is so harmful to their body. It seems that they are just asking for cancer. I

didn't ask for it -- I just got it.

I am not saying that people shouldn't smoke. I know that people are going to do what they want to do no matter how much I preach to them. I don't expect anyone to feel as strongly about this subject as I do, but I do ask smokers to try to understand my point of view.

It is fine if you want to smoke and harm your body. It is your body and your choice. But, if you are going to smoke, do it with fellow smokers or those who approve of the habit.

Second hand smoke can kill. Ask before you light up. Most everyone, especially in the South, will do the polite thing and lie through a smile saying, "Oh, it's fine, I don't mind." But really they are praying two things: one, that the smoke does not drift in their direction and, two, that you are not a chain smoker so you will only smoke one, possibly two.

Just be considerate of those around you. Who knows, you may have a cancer survivor standing right beside you the next time you light up.

BEFORE LIGHTING UP

I STOOD ALONE^{by Ali Heck}

The air was crisp and biting. My friends walked beside me, one on each side. Days like this one leave a unique impression the human mind. **Today was a game day.**

For most people the Auburn vs. Alabama is THE game of the season. The winner of that game gains bragging rights for 364 days until the next time the rivals meet. I do bleed orange and blue, but I hold a hatred for a different team. The University of Georgia Bulldogs.

I am the only person from my hometown who ventured onto the Plains. Everyone that leaves for college most likely goes to UGA. They all told me I was crazy and the constant teasing has continued to this day. And that is why I love nothing more than irritating a Georgia fan. And that is why on the day the AU vs. UGA game was to be played, I was at my best.

The air was crisp and biting. My friends walked beside me, one on each side. Days like this one leave a unique impression the human mind. Today was a game day.

The oldest rivalry in the South was scheduled to take place on the Plains this year. Most teams cherish the home field advantage. But neither UGA nor AU consider being the home team an advantage at all. For the past nine years, it has been tradition for the home team to lose.

We walked to the visitor's section of Jordan-Hare Stadium, a territory very unfamiliar to me. As we made our way through the tunnel and into the bright stadium lights, I got a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. I wanted to sit with my friends, in my student section, with my fans. I would do anything for my friends, but sit in the Georgia section? This was a major sacrifice.

Eventually, we found the seats that my friends had acquired. I had gained entrance to the game with my student ticket. That meant I would be sitting in some Georgia fan's cherished seat. So, I was a little nervous at the prospect of having to sit in a section that not only was I unwelcome in, but that I did not have a ticket for either.

The band was on our left and the cheerleaders to our front. I was out of my element. But I decided to make the best out of a bad situation.

Whenever their band played "Glory, Glory to Old Georgia", I sang Auburn. Whenever, they spelled out Georgia I shouted A-U-B-U-R-N. Whenever there was a kickoff, I yelled "Waaaaar Eaaagle" as loud and as long as my lungs could take it. I would not back down.

The game began and my nerves shot up. Auburn did not start well. And of course that made my section mates ecstatic and cocky. The second quarter went fast and disappointing. UGA led 13-0. Both bands played their half-time shows, attempting to keep team spirit at its highest. The fans all raced to get refreshments and to beat the long lines for the restrooms, none of them wanted to miss one second of the game that might or might not turn around.

As the second half began, tensions started to build. Auburn started to come back. This did not sit well with the fans who encircled me. Disenchanted they sat down and scowled.

I stood alone. With my blue shirt, AU tattoo on my cheek, and orange and blue shaker in hand I became "that annoying Auburn fan."

Since I was the only person standing up, I was

blocking people's view. As confident and defying as I pretended I was being, I waited patiently for the snide comments I knew would eventually greet me.

The game continued and so did I, rooting for every pass, every play as if it were the game deciding event.

Suddenly, there it was. Could it be? I finally ticked off a Georgia fan. But I was not mistaken. I heard the voice for a few rows behind me. "Sit your pretty little Auburn a** down," the angered Georgia fan shouted. I didn't dare turn around. I pretended to not hear him and continued to cheer. But now I felt the pressure to stand firm, to never back down.

I kept standing. The war waged on and I had to accompany my friend to the bathroom. As I shuffled through the crowd, a young Georgia fan sneered "That's right Auburn, get outta here." I said nothing, I knew what I had to do, I had to be strong.

My strength wasn't tested for long. The game was tied and was going into overtime. It seemed the whole stadium was on its feet. The crowd roared with every play. Who would win? Would the home team losing streak be broken by Auburn tonight, or would Georgia take home a victory? We waited and held our

breaths.

I still can't believe it. Even though days have passed, the thought of it still surprises me and then makes me smile. Auburn held firm and fast and won. After nine years we broke the home team curse and turned it back to what it always should have been, the home team advantage.

I will always remember that night, the coldness, the noise and the feeling of tension in the air.

Our victory made it sweet, but my experience will make it last. I will forever carry the image of standing alone in the sea of red and back, never backing down, and standing tall.

I think I probably had the best time I have ever had at an Auburn game, all because I stood alone.

Ben Hubbard



BRING ON THE CHEESECAKE

by Jessica Fritz-Jenkins

I AM...beautiful. As you are beautiful, as he is beautiful, as all of us, even our enemies, are beautiful.

And yet, most of us spend a good portion of our everyday lives looking in the mirror, critiquing ourselves, pointing out problem areas, and generally going "ugh."

We compare ourselves to Kate Moss, Ricky Martin, Nicole Kidman, Brad Pitt and Britney Spears, all of whom in our eyes exemplify the ultimate in beauty, sensuality and ... airbrushing. Yes, airbrushing, that oh-so-handy technique employed by magazines worldwide to make the attractive look perfect.

Perfect? You call Kate Moss perfect? Every time I see her picture, I just want to force-feed her a huge piece of cheesecake!

But her look of three-square-meals-a-year has become en vogue as women and men all over the country starve themselves in order to conform to what they perceive as society's concept of beauty.

Our obsession with appearance, this thing we call beauty, where does it come from? Can it

be photographed and plastered on a 50-foot billboard or circulated on a million magazine covers?

Consider for a moment that it might be something more personal, something a little more than skin-deep. I don't know how many times I've heard some healthy, attractive individual proclaim that she would do anything just to lose 15 pounds.

Hello, we live in America, the land of plenty, the land of opportunity, the land of a \$33 billion diet industry.

People all over the world are starving, and yet here we are, spending ridiculous amounts of money so people can tell us not to eat. And then we get into the fad diets. Between the Cabbage Soup Diet, the Atkins Low-Carb Diet, the Grapefruit/Fruit Juice Diet, the Metabolism Diet, and the Russian Air Force Diet (it actually exists), it seems that all Americans ever do is diet.

In fact, at any one time, half of all teen-age girls in America are dieting. Now I prefer a different set of diet rules. I like the one that says if you eat something and no one sees you eat it,

it has no calories.

And then there are the rules that if you drink a diet soda with a candy bar, the calories in the candy bar are cancelled out by the diet soda. Oh, and did you know that food used for medicinal purposes NEVER counts—such as hot chocolate, toast, ginger ale, and my personal favorite, Sara Lee cheesecake.

Ah, cheesecake: my No. 1 recommended cure for... anything! Never underestimate the healing powers of cheesecake.

Speaking of people in dire need of cheesecake, People Magazine did a cover story entitled "Wasting Away" which chronicled eating disorders among female college students.

It opened with an incident in 1996 in which sandwich bags disappeared in mass quantities from the kitchen of a college sorority house. Upon investigation, the sandwich bags were found hidden in a basement bathroom, filled with vomit.

These popular, successful girls were making themselves sick in order to conform to the types of bodies they saw portrayed in the movies and on TV.

So let me get this straight. If you're a guy, you're not attractive unless you're shallow and insensitive, and if you're a girl, then it doesn't matter what you're like on the inside, honey, because all anybody cares about is how you look.

Interestingly enough, in the very same issue, People Magazine ran a picture of Mariah Carey, with a caption discussing how Mariah "scarcely squeezed" into a designer dress for the Oscars. They denounce eating disorders and say that what matters is truly inside, and yet in the same breath, they denounce a celebrity for gaining a couple of pounds. Now what kind of message does that send?

We must think about what kind of messages we are sending, beauty, body and boys. In discussing the body, magazines do not talk about health and fitness, but rather of looking good and what one could do to look better.

Eating disorders are viewed as a problem, not because of their health risks, but because of their effect on your hair, skin, and nails.

And talk about your bad messages, has anybody seen the movie "She's All That?" In the film, the most popular guy in school, after being dumped by his girlfriend, makes a bet with his friend that he can turn any girl in school into the Prom Queen in six weeks. The target? Shy, self-conscious, Laney, the weirdest girl in school.

Within a few weeks, Laney trades in her overalls, mousy haircut, and Poindexter glasses for a little red dress, 4-inch platforms, a trendy hairdo, and lots of Mary Kay. She turns heads with her new look, becomes automatically happy, falls for jerk-boy, and (surprise, surprise) he falls for her.

So let me get this straight. If you're a guy, you're not attractive unless you're shallow and insensitive, and if you're a girl, then it doesn't matter what you're like on the inside, honey, because all anybody cares about is how you look. We all know that a popular guy can come along and transform a dorky girl into the Kathy



Mandy Morris

Ireland of her high school with one wave of his...magic wand. Now, there's somebody who could really use some cheesecake.

In perusing the magazine rack at Hastings, you might come across articles such as "A Better Body in 30 Days," "The Easy Way to a Flat Stomach," "101 Best Clothing Tips," and "Good Hair, Good Sex." It might surprise you to know that all of these articles come from men's maga-



zines.

Men are beginning to fall victim to this artificial concept of beauty just as readily as women.

Men spend an estimated \$9.5 billion a year on cosmetics and plastic surgery. It is a proven fact that tall men earn \$600 more per inch. Hello, NBA, and look at Donald Trump, Steven Seagal, the Jolly Green Giant, and every day, men are bombarded with media images of tall, muscular manly men, when in reality, the average man is less of a Ricky Martin and more of a Rick Moranis.

Featured twice on the list of People Magazine's 50 Most Beautiful People of the Year, a plus-sized supermodel who goes simply by the name Emme states, "If we can't see ourselves as we truly are, we can never present ourselves as we wish to be seen."

We live in a society that values silicone and sex

over intelligence and compassion. We are so pre-occupied with our appearance that we forget that true beauty isn't something you can buy.

As the Oil of Olay commercial says, "It's not about looking beautiful ... it's about feeling beautiful."

Throughout history, we as a society have changed our minds a myriad of times about what we consider beautiful, and we have arrived at this false, inhuman ideal of starvation and artificiality.

If we want to change society's concept of beauty to something more natural, realistic and healthy, it has to start here. It starts with me and it starts with you.

I urge all of us to seek true beauty in our lives. Let's be healthy and beautiful, but know that true beauty truly comes from the inside.

And with that, I say bring on the cheesecake!

By Sara Hyder

SEE HOW SIMPLE IT ALL CAN BE . . .

Webster defines it as "to value justly; to be aware of; to be grateful for." What is it that I'm speaking of? Appreciation. A virtue not sought out by the masses seeking ultimate redemption from such things as religion. No, the age-old value has lost its luster, lost its edge, its worth and true meaning. The true knowledge of the blessings in your life, whether simple or extravagant, is a grand foundation to rest on. As most of the world churns in a winding gur of oblivion, appreciation could keep feet firmly on the ground. You ask what I'm getting here; I'll try to make the point more clear.

Each day I see people walking along, more like running (fast), in a hurry to reach the next plateau so they can view what? No one wants to seek the valleys where virtue lies; they do not want to have to experience the tiring climb from darkness to summits of light. People are always in a hurry because there is some other place to be, someone more important to see. They do not realize all or even who is passing them by. A friend or loved one calls just to say hello..."I can't really talk right now, I'm very busy"...busy, busy, run, run away from the peace you could find if you just stopped...

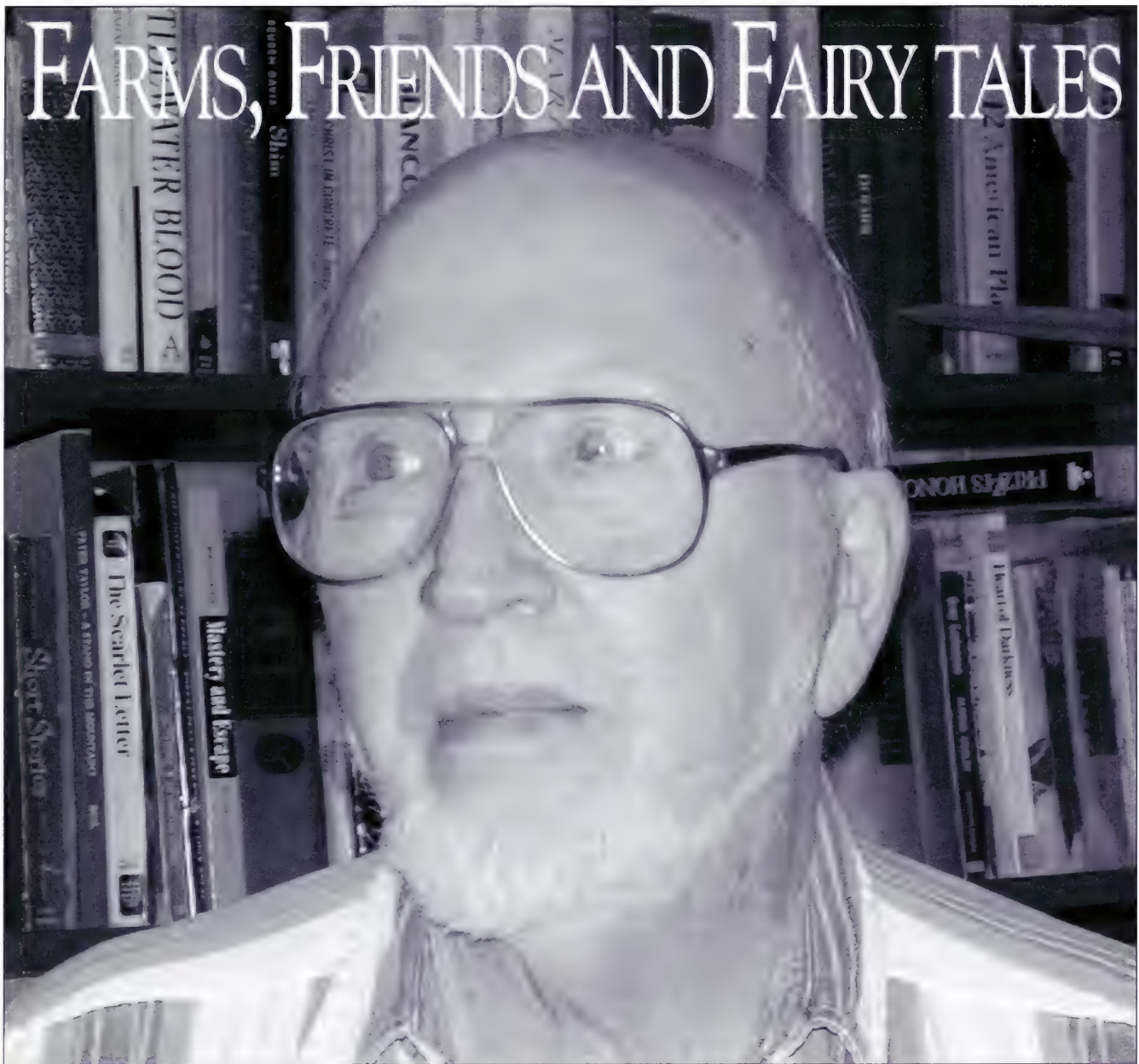
Maybe then it would come to pass how lucky you are to be young and strong with the ability to seek out great opportunity. I've been walking around in a meek, lonely house of appreciation since sickness overtook my body, even my personality. Yet, while I was struggling each day with the possibility of kidney failure, the rest of

the world just rushed on by, more like ran away. Sickness, why be around it? Why attempt to understand how lucky you are to be healthy? How strong your body is, how much possibilities lies in front of you.

We avoid true spirituality. I'm not talking about religion but spirituality, the real nitty-gritty of being grateful to others and being grateful for your circumstances. Perhaps we avoid it because guilt will inevitably follow. Guilt? How weak. Just how many excuses and explanations come from guilt? What is the point? Feel alive! Feel appreciation! Feel as though you have the gifts of the world at your fingertips. Take a moment to love your family and friends, to kiss a spring breeze, or absorb in you eyes a starry night. Appreciate your ability to communicate, to experience the simple things this life has to offer.

Some people-you might be one-walk around in this daze as something wonderful is just handed right to them. A certain talent, a great place to live, a true friend are things everyone has, right? No, you're practicing what the rest of the world has made a habit, ungratefulness. How sad.

I can't tell you if you don't appreciate it, you will lose it. I sure didn't take my health for granted, I have just been sick for most of my life. I refuse to ask the heavens to rid me of the burden, it is not a burden. I appreciate what I do have, a plethora of love, of dreams, and the possibility of helping the rest of the world see how simple it all can be, how colorful, how beautiful.



Faith Ford

Somewhere outside of Auburn, a glittering road rolls past cow pastures and sprawling trailer parks. On a red Alabama drive, just off the beaten path, a house lays nestled between pine trees and hardwoods.

Inside are the signs of a life well lived. Photographs of family and friends line the walls,

relics and paintings, symbols of beliefs and traditions. This is the home of Madison Jones, an author among many other things.

Jones has written nine novels and is both nationally and internationally acclaimed. He is a recipient of the Harper Lee Award, the T.S. Elliot Award and the Michael Shaara Award

for Civil War Fiction. In 1982 he was inducted into Alabama Academy of Distinguished Authors, and in 1989 into the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Jones, who is retired, lives with his wife Shailah and their two dogs Bob and Pig. They have five children, twelve grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

The author appears comfortable in green and blue flannel. White tufts of hair and a neatly trimmed beard frame his face, and his solemn expression wavers only when he speaks. He sits in a cream-colored arm chair and relays the stories of his own life and times. His words are strung out softly in a slow southern accent.

"I like its (the South's) history, it's interesting: the pain and sorrow. It has solidified a kind of southern culture," Jones said. "It's my people, that's all."

Jones's novels address traditional Southern concerns including racial tension, fundamentalism, small towns, and loyalty to the Confederacy. Guilt, pride and the conflict of past and present are also common themes in his writing.

"He draws on his own history and experience," said Bert Hitchcock, a professor of English at Auburn University and former colleague of Jones's. "These are things that come out of the life he has known in the South."

His themes and characters are uniquely Southern, but his message about humanity and the human condition is universal. He has been compared to classic Greek tragedians as well as more modern writers such as William Faulkner.

The characters in Jones's novels are an important aspect of his writing. They tell the story through their own words and experience.

Ward Allen, a longtime friend

and former colleague of Jones, explained why he believes Jones is able to craft his characters so well.

"One of the things that makes him so good is that he hears people's voices," Allen said.

Allen recalled a time when a friend complained of no longer being able to hear the voice of a deceased loved one. Allen thought back and realized that he too, could not recall the voices of his past.

When he brought the issue up to Jones, Allen recalls his friend thinking for a moment before commenting, "The last thing I forget about a person is their voice."

"He notices everything," Allen said. "He may not seem like he's paying attention, but he is."

Jones was born in Nashville, Tenn., on March 21, 1925. The son of a successful Presbyterian small-business man, he spent his early years surrounded by family, living a privileged life in suburban Nashville.

When Jones was 14-years old his father purchased, Sycamore Farm, in the hill country 25 miles north of the city. This event was to forever change the course of his life.

At the age of 17, Jones dropped out of Vanderbilt University, to become a farmer. He moved to Sycamore Farm where he lived for a year and a half.

During this time Jones learned the ways of country. He learned how to farm tobacco, corn and hay and how to raise cattle and

hogs. More importantly, he learned the ways of its people, white and black.

His time spent on the farm later came to play an important role in his writing.

"I loved the place," Jones said. "It was wonderful, very beautiful. A good deal of my writing was centered there. It furnished a lot of the scenery and a lot of the people."

When Jones was 19 years old his father bought another farm near Nashville. Jones lived here while finishing up his schooling at Vanderbilt.

It was at Vanderbilt that Jones met and studied under Donald Davidson, a member of the Fugitive group, an influential literary movement in the South.

Allen said he first met Jones because of their shared admiration for Davidson.

"We found out that we admired the same teacher," Allen said. "Donald Davidson was the first teacher I ever had who's picture was in Time magazine. His views were totally different from anything I'd heard through college up to that."

Jones met another influential teacher while completing graduate school at the University of Florida. Andrew Lytle, also a member of the Fugitive group, became his mentor.

His novel, "I'll take my stand," had an important effect on Jones's life and his writing. "It was a very influential book," Jones said. "It was thought to be important and still is."

While at the University of Florida, Jones met Shailah McEvilly. The couple was married in 1951, the same year Jones received his master's degree.

He began work on his first novel, *The Innocent*, while at his first job as an English instructor at the University of Miami in Ohio.

"I didn't have an outline in my head or on paper either," Jones said. "I started with a man in a certain situation and though I

During this time Jones learned the ways of country. He learned how to farm tobacco, corn and hay and how to raise cattle and hogs. More importantly, he learned the ways of its people, white and black.

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"All of my feelings tend to be southern, and Auburn was as southern as I could get."

- Madison Jones
Writer emeritus, Auburn University

had some vague plans before of what such things would happen, I mostly kind of made it up as I went along.

Jones said once he has created a character and setting, the stories seem to write themselves.

"You start off with a particular man and a certain particular situation and some kind of idea of what he's up to.

"You are guided in terms of what can and can not happen and what kind of man would do certain things under certain circumstances.

"Knowing that much, where he lived and what life was like around him, gives you to some extent a kind of guide as to what you should do. There is kind of a logic to it," Jones said.

After leaving the University of Miami, Jones taught at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville for a year.

In 1956, Jones got an offer to come to Auburn and teach creative writing.

"I came, and I stayed," Jones said.

He said he was partial to Auburn because it was more rural and traditional.

"All of my feelings tend to be southern, and Auburn was as southern as I could get," Jones said.

Jones, who is currently a professor emeritus, served as a professor of English and an alumni writer-in residence until 1987.

He said he enjoyed his years as a professor, but always knew that he was primarily a writer.

"The main thing for me was writing fiction," Jones said.

From his office on the ninth floor of the Haley Center, Hitchcock recalled fondly his years working with Jones.

"He was a good colleague," Hitchcock said. "While we were publishing scholarly things, he

was publishing fiction. That made him a unique member of the department."

Jones received several fellowships throughout his years. In 1954 he received The Sewanee Review Fellowship, in 1968 he received the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship and in 1973 he received the Guggenheim Fellowship.

Jones can remember years of writing with a pencil and paper.

"I think of how much time I wasted doing that," Jones said. "After I wrote it I had to rewrite it. I was a two finger typist, so that was slow work."

Since his retirement Jones has continued to write, though no longer with a pencil and pad. His latest novel, *To the Winds*, was published in 1996.

He has also been working in fine arts.

A number of clay heads, adorn the Jones' living room.

The busts, constructed by Jones, reveal his wide range of interests.

He has figures from Greek mythology, including Hector from the *Illiad*, a fawn and another he refers to as a young Greek.

Christ sits on a table in the middle of the room and Satan rests beneath the arms of a sprawling plant. An old hill woman and a circuit-riding preacher, are among the others.

In the den at the Jones house, paintings and photographs line barely visible walls. Some of the painting are the work of Shailah Jones, who is a skilled painter, others have been crafted by Jones himself.

The colorful painting include scenes from the Garden of Eden before the fall as well as sentimental images from Jones's farming days including a charging buffalo and a mule drawn carriage.

Photographs of children and

grandchildren, old family and friends, tell a story of a full life.

Jones seems content in his Alabama home, though he feels some of the uniquely Southern qualities seem to be slipping away from the South as the cities close in on agrarian lands. He longs for the tradition and morality of the old South, and he hopes that the culture, which is so often misunderstood, is not forgotten or lost.

"There's a certain many things I like historically about the South," Jones said, "certain attitudes, a tragic sense, a sense of history and a kind of historical consciousness. It makes one able to participate in the past. It makes you realize that things that happened 50 or 75 years ago happened to people of a different kind of consciousness than we have now."

Jones, who is originally from Nashville, Tenn., writes about what he knows. He writes about the South; the history and tradition, the sorrow and the joy.

"He draws on his own experience," Bert Hitchcock, an English professor at Auburn University said. "These are things that come out of the life he has known in the South."

According to Jones, much of the material for his novels sprung from time spent on his father's farm in Tennessee. Approximately 25 miles north of Nashville, Sycamore Valley Farm lays nestled between the rolling hills and streams of Tennessee.

"I loved the place, Jones said. "It was wonderful, very beautiful. A good deal of my writing was centered there. It furnished a lot of the scenery and a lot of the people."

Jones's writing focuses on the human condition. His characters are indefinitely southern, but their suffering is universal.

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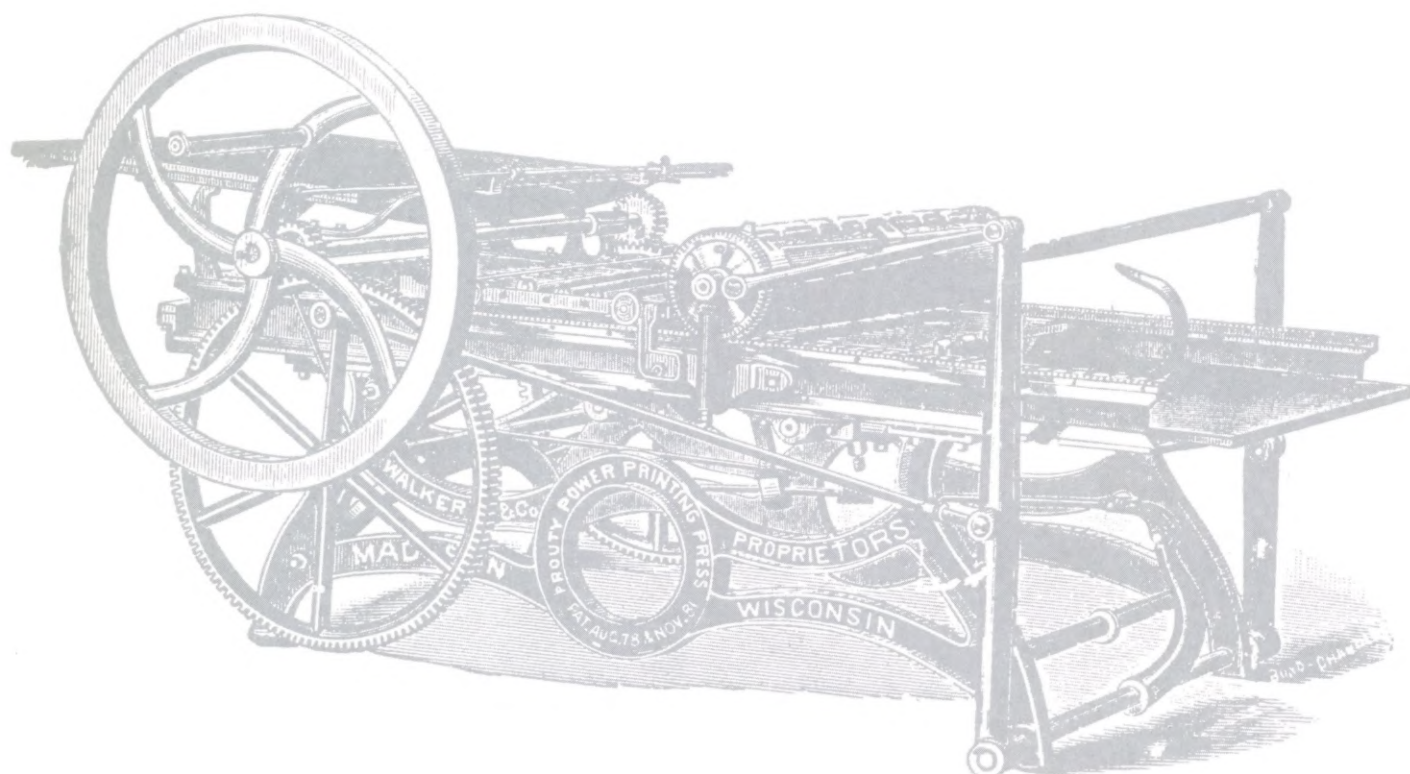
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*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And - like the baseless fabric of this vision -
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.*

*William Shakespeare
(The Tempest V.i. 148-158)*